Report

on the

Administration of Bengal

1922-23

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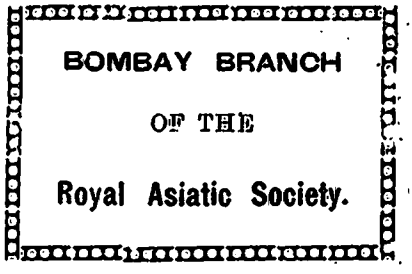

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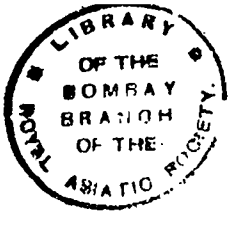

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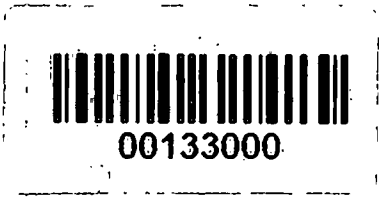
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INTRODUCTION.

The criticism has often been made that the annual administration reports of this Government are bulky in size and uninteresting in matter. An attempt has, therefore, been made this year to enlarge Part I which is the narrative portion, reduce the bulk of the report by eliminating a good deal of the statistical data contained in Part II which do not interest the ordinary reader, and to bring it out in a form which can be more easily handled.

Part I of the report purports to be a general summary of the main features of administration up to the end of the previous calendar year. It is intended mainly to give a bird's-eye view of the year's work. Part II consists of detailed chapters on the administration of different departments based generally on the financial year of 1922-23. In a few cases, however, the year reviewed is the calendar year of 1922. For the assistance of those who require more detailed information references have been given at the beginning of each chapter to the annual reports on which this part is mainly based.

It is hoped that in its new form the book will find a wider circle of readers.

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BENGAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT, 1922-23.

PART I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

1.—The Political Situation.

The year under report is the first year of Lord Lytton's administration and the last of the first Council under the Reform Scheme. It marks also an entirely new stage in the development of non-co-operation propaganda which has now all but discarded not only its original programme but its methods. It provides, therefore, a convenient vantage ground from which to take a brief survey of the past. It is not proposed to go into the history of the last two years in any detail, but it is necessary to retrace briefly the different stages of the evolution of the movement to enable an appreciation of the new shape and direction that it has now taken.

Origin of non-co-operation movement.

The movement originated from a variety of causes, some political, others, religious and economic. The spirit of nationalism stimulated by the war, the racial bitterness engendered by the Punjab disturbances, the bitter resentment of the Muhammadans over the delay in announcing terms of peace and their apprehension that they might prove unfavourable to Turkey which found vent in the Khilafat movement, the disappointment of the extreme section of politicians with the Reforms, and the economic distress resulting from the war, all contributed their share; but it was the remarkable personality of Mr. Gandhi which gathered up the threads of discontent and wove them into a movement having for its objective the destruction of existing Government. The steps he laid down in his programme were intended to achieve this object and at the same time to provide a means of self-discipline for his followers, which he considered to be fundamentally necessary in order to fit them to carry the programme to fruition.

Non-co-operation programme of 1920.

The programme consisted at first of four stages, viz., first resignation of titles and honorary offices; then resignation of posts in the Government services save in the Police and the Army; thirdly, resignation of services

in the Police and the Army; and, finally, refusal to pay taxes. In September 1920 this programme was further elaborated by the addition of other items such as the boycott of Government schools and colleges and their replacement by national institutions, boycott of courts of justice, boycott of foreign goods, and withdrawal of candidates from election to the first Council under the Reforms. As the result was to show, none of these items of the programme achieved at any time any but a very partial and ephemeral success, but they provided a large field for the co-operation of people of different capacities with different mentalities, while the personality of the leader achieved, by and by, a kind of moral coalition not only of those who wanted to see an immediate change effected in the administration but also of those who were susceptible to appeals of a high moral order. In pressing the original programme upon the people of the country insistence was continually laid upon the development of the moral virtues which it was to effect, while the dangerous potentialities involved in repudiation of authority in every sphere were altogether ignored. The result was that in December 1920, although little progress had been made with the specific items of the programme, Mr. Gandhi was able, at Nagpur, to capture the entire Congress organisation for the furtherance of his movement. Indication of the growing strength of the extremist element in the movement was to be found in the change of the Congress creed which left the definition of the word "Swaraj" indefinite and omitted all references to the British connection. While thus giving an encouragement to the extremist element it left at the same time a sufficiently wide platform for other shades of more moderate political opinion to co-operate upon. It was apparent, also, that a new direction was to be given to the movement by efforts to create in the ignorant masses the mentality on which the whole movement was founded, namely, that the existing Government was an evil thing and must be done away with. But emphasis was laid on all efforts in furtherance of the movement being non-violent in character.

Progress of the movement in 1921.

It did not require a great deal of political foresight to predict that however high the ethical virtues inculcated might be, the immediate result was bound to be a spirit of general disloyalty and lawlessness. The year 1921 was marked by intensification of the agitation by means of numerous public meetings at which the language employed increased

steadily in violence. The Khilafat agitators openly described Great Britain to be the arch-enemy of Islam and predicted that a time would come when it would be incumbent on all Mussalmans to draw the sword in defence of their religion. About mid-summer the Jamiut-ul-ulema issued their *fatwa* that all service under Government was forbidden by their religion and that service in the Police and in the Army was specially heinous. In August took place the Mopla outbreak in Malabar.

Results of non-co-operation in Bengal, 1921.

In Bengal the year opened with a general strike of students of schools and colleges in furtherance of a demand for their nationalisation. This was followed by a series of industrial strikes, and later in the year, by the exodus of coolies from the tea gardens of Assam which became the starting point of further agitation against constituted authority and culminated in the purely political strikes of the employees of the Assam-Bengal Railway and the steamer companies as a protest against certain action which Government felt compelled to take in connection with the exodus. Other important manifestations were not wanting. Outbreaks in jails involving loss of life and property occurred on a large scale in Rajshahi, and on a smaller scale in other places during the middle of the year. An intensified agitation against the Village Self-Government Act in Midnapore and other districts was partly successful, and settlement operations were subjected to obstruction in various places. The difficulty at every stage was that some legitimate causes of grievance were generally seized upon and exploited in a manner which rendered dispassionate enquiry and judgment almost impossible. At the same time on all occasions when the situation demanded strong action on the part of Government and their agents, the latter were held up to odium on humanitarian grounds and denounced in exaggerated language which again had to be justified by distortion of facts. One of the most tragic features of the so-called economic strikes was the part played by the politicians in deluding the workers by irresponsible promises of all kinds, and one of the most pathetic examples of this was to be found in the Assam-Bengal strike at the conclusion of which some of the strikers themselves conveyed with grave warning the following words:—"All that is left to us now is to tell our brother labourers in India how we have been treated so that they may profit by our experience. Let them not be persuaded by our leader 'politicians' to strike for political reasons only and, like us, be made pawns in the game of politics."

Volunteer associations.

Simultaneously with these events, disquieting developments began to take place in connection with the volunteer movement. Some of the volunteer associations had originally been started for philanthropic and social service and had, in fact, rendered valuable assistance in helping strangers and facilitating the maintenance of order at fairs, pilgrimages and conferences. Designing persons, however, were not slow to discover and to utilise for political purposes these organisations as a potent instrument of political and social boycott. Originally recruited from educated youths, they began to draw adherents from unemployed mill hands and the city rabble, and the activities of the associations became more and more marked by violence, intimidation and obstruction. At the beginning of October a manifesto, signed by Mr. Gandhi and a large number of prominent non-co-operators, laid it down that it was the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with Government. Two important developments followed, viz., an intensive campaign to undermine the loyalty of the police and a rapid development in the activities of " volunteer " corps. Attempts to usurp the functions of the police, intimidation to enforce *hartals*, boycott under the guise of Swadeshi and temperance movements to impair the authority of Government, soon became prominent features of these associations. Frequent appeals were made to Government for protection, but at the same time there was a general disinclination to have recourse to the ordinary procedure of the law, partly because of the difficulty of obtaining legal evidence, and partly, through fear of further intimidation of the same kind. In these circumstances it was a matter of no small difficulty for Government to decide at what stage their suppression was essential in the interest of peace and order without antagonising reasonable public opinion which valued the freedom of the right of political association.

Civil disobedience and the visit of the Prince of Wales.

By November 1921 it became clear that some action would have to be taken. Neither the course that the agitation was taking nor the methods employed by those who were carrying on the agitation, nor the consequence of such methods, appeared to have caused any modification in Mr. Gandhi's attitude. On the contrary, on November the 4th, at Delhi, the All-India Congress Committee authorised every province to start civil disobedience which Mr. Gandhi himself defined as " a civil revolution which, wherever practised, would mean the end of Government authority

and open defiance of Government and its laws." On November 17th, the day of the landing of the Prince of Wales at Bombay, the attempt to enforce a general *hartal* culminated in serious riots lasting for three days and involving a casualty of 53 killed and 400 wounded. In this Presidency persons were moving all over the country stirring up disaffection amongst the masses assisted by an intensified campaign of highly inflammatory speeches, which, addressed as they were, in nine cases out of ten, to audiences made up of illiterate and emotional masses could have but one result, namely, the spreading broadcast of the feelings of hatred and disaffection. On the 4th of November a riot took place in Howrah. This was followed by a prolonged tramway strike and the 17th of November was marked in Calcutta, and to a lesser degree in the mufassal, by a wholesale terrorism and intimidation by which normal life was interfered with and the liberty of vast numbers of people in carrying on their normal avocations curtailed. Confronted with this dangerous situation, Government felt bound to enforce the provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, Part II, for combating the illegal activities of volunteer associations.

Lord Ronaldshay's speech, November 21st.

His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay took the first available opportunity of reviewing the situation in a speech of remarkable force to the Legislative Council on November the 21st. "The activities of these bodies," he said in reference to the volunteer corps, "have become a menace to the liberty of law-abiding citizens, and they have accordingly been proclaimed to be unlawful associations under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. That is the first step Government has considered it necessary to take. Government is also of opinion that the liberty hitherto accorded to all and sundry to hold and address meetings and organise demonstrations has been grossly abused. No one can accuse Government of having exhibited any desire to repress the ordinary freedom of speech tolerated in any free country. But there are limits beyond which no Government that has regard to the interests of law-abiding citizens over whom it holds sway, can permit license to go. We are of opinion that those limits have been reached, and that the instigations to the people to overthrow the existing order have become a menace to the maintenance of peace. It has therefore become necessary to impose some restrictions upon the freedom of holding meetings and processions in this city." His Excellency then went on to explain why it had become necessary to

have recourse to these measures. "Let it not be forgotten," he said, "that if Government has a duty towards the public the public equally has a duty towards Government and, indeed, towards itself. No police force in the world can perform its task adequately in the absence of the co-operation of the public. If people are intimidated and refrain from lodging complaints, it becomes almost impossible for the police to help them. It is the bounden duty of every loyal citizen to assist the police whenever occasion offers. Not only has the active co-operation of the public with the police been conspicuous by its absence, but there has been too marked a tendency on the part of many who, I am sure, cannot in their hearts, desire to see lawlessness triumphant, to act in a manner which can only encourage the lawless and render more difficult the task of the police. The encouraging of strikes, regardless of the reasonableness of the alleged cause of the strike or of the consequences is an example of what I mean.

. . . There is another form of action well calculated to impair the efficiency of the force and to render more difficult the maintenance of order, and that is the adoption of the attitude on the part of a certain class of persons, that whenever the police are compelled to take action to quell disturbances, it is the rioters who must be in the right and Government who must be in the wrong." Then he struck a note of solemn warning which has by no means lost its force in the situation of the present day: "If they care to study history, they will find it is almost invariably the case that those who sow the wind in the end reap the whirlwind. It is very easy to fall into the error of thinking that abuse of constituted authority is synonymous with patriotism, and following upon this initial error, it is only too easy to raise up the forces of disorder. They need not dive very deep into history. They will find the whole process set out before their eyes in Russia at the present time. But let me beg of them with all the power I can command not to forget that when once the forces of disorder are thoroughly roused, they will find themselves quite incapable of controlling them. Mr. Gandhi himself is discovering this eternal truth at the present moment. He publicly admits that he has been more instrumental than any other in bringing into being a spirit of revolt. And what is he doing now? Let me quote his own words:—'The Swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils'. . .

. . Mr. Gandhi confesses that he found the crowd in Bombay bent upon mischief and destruction and unwilling to listen even to him

'With non-violence on our lips,' he says, 'we have terrorised those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God.' Let us at least be thankful for this that Mr. Gandhi has at last realised that, which from bitter experience many have long known, viz., that to talk about non-violence in connection with non-co-operation is a pitiful travesty of language."

Proposal for a Round Table Conference.

The policy thus initiated was assailed at once as an interference with the rights of freedom of association and of free speech and there was a disposition on this ground for Moderates to make common cause with the Extremists. The result was seen in a suggestion, by a deputation of leaders of moderate opinion to His Excellency the Viceroy, during his visit to Calcutta, that a Round Table Conference should be held so that a solution might be found of the situation through the means of some act of constructive statesmanship. As was to be expected, His Excellency's reply, after stating that the policy adopted was not a new policy but the application of one which lies at the very root of all civilized Government, pointed out the imperative necessity of the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party as a condition precedent to a conference. No such assurance was, however, forthcoming and the proposal for the time being fell through, and at the Congress which met at Ahmedabad during Christmas week, an overwhelming majority in the Subjects Committee rejected the resolution as to a Round Table Conference. Though events had proved to Mr. Gandhi the dangers of mass civil disobedience, his attitude was still undecided, and was reflected in the Congress resolution, which was framed in a way which suggested that for the time being civil disobedience would be restricted to defiance of the Seditious Meetings Act. "This Congress is of opinion," so ran the main resolution, "that in order to concentrate attention upon civil disobedience whether mass or individual, whether of an offensive or defensive character, instructions are to be issued under proper safeguards by the working committees of the Provincial Congress Committees concerned."

Progress of the movement in 1922.

But moderate opinion still held to the idea of a Round Table Conference and early in the following year a conference was held at Bombay, at the instance of Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, of politicians outside the

Congress fold, to formulate terms upon which it would be possible to have such a conference. This conference, to which Mr. Gandhi was also invited, was presided over by Sir Sankaran Nair who, however, soon discovered that he differed too much in fundamentals with Mr. Gandhi to be able to co-operate with him. In a letter to the press explaining his action in withdrawing from the conference, Sir Sankaran stated that Mr. Gandhi, while reserving to himself freedom to make active and intensive preparation for civil disobedience by propaganda and enrolment of volunteers, refused to accept the proposals of the conveners, put forward the minimum demands of the Congress party as regards the Punjab, the Khilafat and Swaraj, and demanded the unconditional release of all Congress and Khilafat volunteers and all others convicted under the ordinary provisions of the Penal Code as a *sine qua non* for a conference, and was only prepared to delay civil disobedience unconditionally till January 31st. All chances of a settlement by conference now disappeared, and there followed the letter of Mr. Gandhi to the Viceroy of the 4th February, in which he declared that lawless repression had made the immediate adoption of civil disobedience an imperative duty and that for the present it was to be confined to Bardoli.

Chauri Chaura and the Bardoli decisions.

Before, however, the preparations for launching a "no tax" campaign had been completed at Bardoli, the ghastly tragedy of Chauri Chaura occurred, and proved once more what Mr. Gandhi repeatedly failed to realise, that mass movements of the kind he was organising must inevitably end in violence. The extent to which self-delusion can proceed is revealed in an article which appeared in *Young India* soon afterwards. "God has been abundantly kind to me," he wrote. "He has warned me for the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal or hateful." After referring to the warning in 1919 of the incidents at Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Kheda, Amritsar and Kasur, and that of Bombay in the preceding November, he continued: "But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras gave the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura. . . . Suppose the non-violent disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed, the Government

had abdicated in favour of the victors of Bardoli, who would control the unruly element that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation? Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. . . .

'But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?' spoke the voice of satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink. 'Surely it is cowardly to withdraw the next day after pompous threats to the Government and promises to the people of Bardoli!' Thus satan's invitation was to deny truth and, therefore, religion, to deny God himself. . . . The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound or unwise, but there is no doubt that it is *religously* sound and I venture to assure the doubters that the country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error." The article concludes with the pathetic confession that the immediate issue had been shifted, that the withdrawal of the notifications or the discharge of prisoners could no longer be pressed and that all must suffer for the crime of Chauri Chaura. The extract deserves careful perusal, for it explains the strength as well as the weakness of Mr. Gandhi's position—alike his innate spirituality and regard for truth when at last he could no longer help seeing it, which is the secret of his influence over the people of India, and his pitiful miscalculations of human nature which rendered him such a dangerous political leader. It is interesting also as showing the spirit in which he conceived his movement as contrasted with that which actuates that movement now under the leadership of his lieutenants. The immediate results of Chauri Chaura were the decisions taken at Bardoli to suspend the programme of civil disobedience, to recognise the laxity in the recruitment of volunteer corps, to suspend picketing and other activities specially designed to court arrest. At the same time a constructive programme, of which the main features were the enlistment of one crore of members of the Congress, the popularisation of the spinning wheel, the manufacture of *khaddar*, and the improvement of the social, mental and moral condition of depressed classes, was promulgated for the perfecting of the internal organisation of the Congress. But it was too late, and not all his fasting and penance could lay the ghost which his propaganda had raised. His continual change of front had damped the enthusiasm

even of his followers, and the All-India Congress Committee which met at Delhi on the 24th February at last revealed to Mr. Gandhi himself the gulf that separated him from many of them. The resolution as finally drafted, authorising individual civil disobedience, whether of a defensive or aggressive character, in respect of particular places or particular laws with the sanction of Provincial Congress Committees did not represent Mr. Gandhi's personal views, which were to adhere to the Bardoli decisions. As he confessed afterwards, he was a sadder and a wiser man and he realised that the boasted non-violence was only skin-deep. "I was prepared," he wrote, "for a certain amount of depression, disappointment and resentment, but I confess I was totally unprepared for the hurricane of opposition. It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. . . . They could not wrest power from the Government by such humdrum work. They wanted to deliver 'non-violent' blows! All this appeared so thoroughly unreal. They would not stop to think that even if they could defeat the Government by a childish display of rage, they could not conduct the government of the country for a single day without serious and laborious organisation and construction. . . . Surely we have long neglected the untouchable brother. He has slaved for us too long. We must now serve him. . . . Social service department has been looked at with the utmost contempt. If the non-co-operation movement is not malicious that department is a necessity. We want to render alike to friend and foe service in time of distress. . . . Social service and temperance were laughed at as part of the struggle for Swaraj. It was a painful exhibition of ignorance of the essentials of Swaraj."

Results of non-co-operation in 1922.

It was not to be expected that the incessant abuse of constituted authority which accompanied the preparations for civil disobedience would pass without manifestations of violence. Quite early in the year serious riots occurred at Salanga Hât in Pabna, Tittagarh in the 24-Parganas, Madarihat in Jalpaiguri, Ulipur in Rangpur, and Chauddagram in Tippera. It is worth remembering that throughout these disturbances Government was on the defensive. It was the non-co-operators who attacked and compelled Government to take up

weapons for its defence. The policy of civil disobedience had been accepted by the Congress at the beginning of the previous November. It was not till towards the end of that month that action was taken against the volunteers. Nevertheless, in February the Legislative Council passed a resolution recommending the withdrawal of the notifications declaring the volunteer corps to be illegal. It was impossible to take action on the resolution until their lawless activities showed some signs of abatement. As Lord Ronaldshay pertinently asked: " Do those who urge us to take this step regard civil disobedience as a lawful form of political activity? If they do not, by what process of reasoning do they argue that the agency by which civil disobedience is to be carried out should be declared by Government to be a lawful agency? "

The failure of Mr. Gandhi's programme.

The arrest of Mr. Gandhi in March, however, dissolved the cement which held the conflicting elements together and in the months that followed there was a noticeable tendency to abandon the specific items of the programme of the leader. The more aggressive sections of Mr. Gandhi's followers never had much faith in his constructive programme. Civil disobedience was, for the moment, not a practicable proposal, and in spite of the earnest appeal to the country of the Congress Committee towards midsummer, to concentrate upon the constructive programme, the response was poor. To add to this, signs were not wanting of strained feelings between Hindus and Muhammadans whose unity Mr. Gandhi had so strenuously sought to achieve. By the end of the summer, Government were able to give effect to the resolution of the Council, by withdrawing the notifications placing a ban upon volunteer organisations, and not renewing the Seditious Meetings Act. For the time being the movement had purged itself of its more seditious manifestations, and on the last day of November, His Excellency Lord Lytton was thus able to review the situation: " Lord Ronaldshay said last year that a wonderful new era would have dawned for India had it not been for the wild passions which had been let loose upon the land, by those who have pinned their faith to revolution. Well, I think I may say with truth a year later, that a new era has dawned in India in spite of these wild passions which have been let loose, and it is not now in the power of any section to prevent that dawn from passing into day. Whether it will be a wonderfully good or a

wonderfully bad day, whether in fact it would be wonderful at all, depends upon the work which is done in that day." Then after referring to the irritation caused by the speech of Mr. Lloyd George he went on: "To undo the Act of 1919 would be the action of revolutionaries. The new Government in England is a Conservative Government and Conservatives are not revolutionaries. Now I want to say to all those who take an interest in politics in this province—our political destinies are in our own hands—they are ours to make or mar."

As events were to show, the desire not to undo the Act of 1919 could not, however, be predicated of the non-co-operators. The autumn of 1922 marks the beginning of a new phase in the movement and its final break with the methods which Mr. Gandhi had laid down. Against Council entry Mr. Gandhi had strenuously set his face. The first rift in the lute occurred in the Provincial Conference at Chittagong where the policy of entering the Councils in order to break them was advocated. In June, the All-India Congress Committee authorised the President to nominate a few gentlemen to tour the country and report on the possibility of proclaiming civil disobedience, and in August, Mr. C. R. Das advocated a change in the details of the Congress programme before the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. The report of the Civil Disobedience Committee which was submitted late in October showed, that while there was unanimity on the question of the unpreparedness of the country for mass civil disobedience and the desirability of entering the local bodies to facilitate the working of the constructive programme, there was a serious divergence of views on the question of entering the Councils for the purpose of wrecking them. This last question was destined to cause a schism in the ranks of the non-co-operators for some months to come. Mr. C. R. Das had, apparently, never been a very keen supporter of Council boycott and there were others now, well known in public life, who shared his feeling. Soon after the receipt of the report, Mr. Das issued a manifesto in which he declared that to end the Councils was the only effective boycott. "The question is," he wrote, "if we are in a majority, what are we to do? We should begin our operations by a formal demand of the particular way in which we desire to mend the Councils. If our demands are accepted we have obtained a real foundation for Swaraj. If our demand is not recognised we must non-co-operate with the bureaucracy

by obstructing everything, every work of the Council. We must disallow the entire budget. We must move the adjournment of the House on every possible occasion. In fact, we must so proceed that the Council will refuse to do any work unless and until our demands are satisfied." The programme evoked both support and criticism, for the rank and file of the Congress, and a few leaders, were still disinclined to depart from the path chalked out by Mr. Gandhi. The issue between the two sections was to be decided at the Gaya Congress for which both parties now began to prepare.

The Gaya Congress.

The presidential address of Mr. C. R. Das to the Congress at Gaya deserves more than a passing notice because he is now the leader of a parliamentary party in Bengal which is always threatening to adopt unparliamentary methods. Starting from the thesis that "it is not by acquiescence in the doctrine of law and order that the English people have obtained the recognition of their fundamental rights" he went on to say that to understand the extent to which "this exploded doctrine of law and order influences the minds of learned and sober men" one had only to read the report of the Repressive Laws Committee which recommended the continuance of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act on the Statute Book. Then he referred to the items of work which the Congress should recommend. The rights of different communities under a Swaraj Government should be clearly defined, there should be a clear and emphatic confirmation of the Lucknow Compact, foreign propaganda should be carried on to gain the sympathy and co-operation of selfless followers of liberty in every land, there should be participation in the great Asiatic federation which the speaker saw in the course of formation, although Swaraj was indefinable and could not be confused with any particular system of government a clear scheme of the system of government which the Congress demanded should be placed before the country, the work of labour and peasant organisation should be taken up because experience had convinced the speaker "that labour and the peasantry of India to-day are, if anything, more eager to attain Swaraj than the so-called middle and educated classes" and the Councils should be entered in order to non-cooperate with Government. Finally, after stating that the bureaucracy had received added strength from these Reformed Councils, he went on to warn

his countrymen against "the policy of allowing these Reformed Councils to work their wicked will. There will undoubtedly be a further increase of taxation and there is an apprehension in my mind, that if we allow this policy of drift to continue, the result will be that we shall lose the people we have with us to-day. Let us break the Councils, if the bureaucracy does not concede the demands of the people. If there is fresh taxation, as there is bound to be, let the responsibility be on the bureaucracy. Then you and I and the people will jointly fight the powers that be." But even if provincial autonomy were at once conceded Mr. Das would not be satisfied. "I am firmly convinced," he said, "that parliamentary government is not a government by the people and for the people. Many of us believe that the middle class must win Swaraj for the masses. I do not believe in the possibility of any class movement being ever converted into a movement for Swaraj. If to-day the British Parliament grants provincial autonomy in the provinces with responsibility in the Central Government, I for one would protest against it because that will inevitably lead to the concentration of power in the hands of the middle class. I do not believe that the middle class will then part with their power. My ideal of Swaraj will never be satisfied unless the people co-operate with us in its attainment. Any other attempt will inevitably lead to what European socialists call a 'Bourgeois' government. . . . To me the organisation of village life and the practical autonomy of small local centres are more important than either provincial autonomy or central responsibility." How this was to be secured was not discussed, but the obvious implication was that they could only arise out of the total destruction of existing administrative units and machinery.

The split between advocates of Council entry and no-changers.

The influence of Mr. Gandhi, however, was still too strong and despite the advocacy of Hakim Ajmal Khan and Messrs. Das and Nehru the majority of the Congress decided to advise all voters to abstain from standing for any of the Councils or voting for any candidates standing for them. In flamboyant language they notified the world that on the attainment of Swaraj the people of India, though holding themselves liable for all debts and liabilities, rightly or wrongly incurred hitherto by Government, would not hold themselves bound to repay any loans or discharge any liabilities incurred on and after this date, on the authority or sanction of the so-called legislatures, and resolved to complete the

preparation for civil disobedience by strengthening the organisation by the enrolment of 50,000 volunteers and collection of 25 lakhs of rupees for the Tilak Swarajya Fund.

1923. The Swarajya party and agitation for Council entry.

A schism on the vital question of Council entry was now inevitable and on the 1st of January the new party, calling itself the Swarajya party, with Mr. Das as leader, issued its manifesto. The party decided to remain within the Congress fold but to work on their own lines and convert the country. The history of the succeeding nine months is the history of a succession of conferences to heal the schism. Except for a slight recrudescence of picketing in Bakarganj and Noakhali at the beginning of the year, and similar isolated attempts in other Eastern Bengal districts as a result of the resolutions passed at the Gaya Congress, the political situation in Bengal did not show any decided change. The no-changers appealed for volunteers but met with scant success, their failure being particularly noticeable in Calcutta, where students generally refused to sign the enlistment agreement for volunteers. On the other hand, the Swaraj party's propaganda appeared to be meeting with increasing success and opinion seemed to be veering round to the policy favoured by Mr. C. R. Das. The subscriptions raised by his party for electioneering purposes appeared to be likely to interfere seriously with the collections for the Tilak Swarajya Fund, and this apprehension on the part of the no-changers who found it increasingly difficult to get funds seems to have given rise to some bitterness. About the end of February a compromise was arrived at, whereby both parties were to be at liberty to work out the items of their programme without interfering with each other, and both were to co-operate for raising funds for the constructive programme of the Congress, the propaganda relating to Council entry remaining in abeyance until the 30th April. But by the end of that time it was clear that the Gaya programme had produced little activity and no enthusiasm. Even in Calcutta, only a few hundred volunteers had responded to the appeal of the Congress party. When, therefore, in pursuance of a resolution passed at the Provincial Conference, the All-India Congress Committee was asked to allow Bengal freedom of action in starting civil disobedience, the latter shelved the question by demanding a statement of the number of members and volunteers and of the funds available in each district. Meanwhile, Mr. Das, while observing the truce, had been quietly organising and gaining over adherents. By the middle of the following month the tension resulted in open breach between the two sections at the Barisal Conference, from which Mr. C. R. Das retired,

after unsuccessfully attempting to bring up a resolution to remove the ban on Council entry. It was evident that whatever the relative strength of the two sections might be, that led by Mr. Das was the better organised. It had not, so far, done very much openly beyond holding a few public meetings, but it now decided to start a daily newspaper to further its aims and urge them before the public.

Despite his breach with the no-changers in this province, Mr. Das was apparently encouraged by reports of supporters of Council entry in other provinces to attend the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, towards the end of May. There, the Council entry programme received a notable victory in the decision to suspend the agitation against it, though at the cost of the resignation of the working committee of the Congress who had decided on a contrary course. At a meeting in Madras a few days later, Mr. Das explained that he aimed at direct action just as much as the most orthodox non-co-operators, but what he wanted to do was to fight the bureaucracy from all directions, from inside the Councils by trying to make Government impossible, and from outside, by working the non-co-operation programme more enthusiastically than ever. The decision of the All-India Congress Committee was, nevertheless, challenged in Bengal, where it only helped to accentuate the differences still further. It was decided, therefore, to hold a special session of the Congress at Delhi in September. Before this took place, Mr. Shyamsundar Chakraverty and other orthodox leaders had resigned from the Provincial Congress Committee and the Swarajya party had managed to capture it. A growing feeling that unity should be maintained at all costs was now evident, and this and Mr. Gandhi's alleged message to Moulana Mahomed Ali, authorising a change in programme, and communicated to him, as he said, by some "nameless soul forces" eventually proved decisive. A resolution was passed authorising Council entry and urging the constructive programme of Mr. Gandhi, but it was clear that the main effort was now to be directed to securing the return of as many Swarajist candidates as possible at the elections and to work within the Council. Of efforts to carry out the so-called constructive programme outside the Council, there is little to record. On the contrary, the year was marked by growing indications of strained communal feelings and attempts to revive the old revolutionary organisations.

Communal feeling.

The differences of opinion of the two communities over the provisions of the Calcutta Municipal Bill relating to communal representation and cow-killing, and the resentment of certain sections of the Hindus at the acceptance of the Muhammadan views on these two points, served to focus attention on the difficulties in the way of communal unity. Although the manifestations of ill-feeling in some other provinces were happily absent from Bengal, the under-current of mistrust continued throughout the year to throw up occasional eddies, which caused anxiety. In the mufassal the estrangement was evidenced by the combination, in certain districts, of Muhammadan cultivators against Hindu money-lenders, by the objection taken by Maulvis to the utterance of " Bande Mataram " by Muhammadans, and later, by serious rioting arising from a trifling incident about cattle trespass in Faridpur district, where large bodies of Muhammadans and Namasudras faced each other in the open country on a frontage of about a mile for several days, until police reinforcements arrived and separated them. As the Bakr-Id festival approached, evidence of strained relations began to be apparent in other places also, but fortunately, the festival passed off without any untoward incidents. Later in the year, the visit of Swami Sradhanand to Calcutta to explain the Sudhi movement led to counter-propaganda amongst Muhammadans, though the Swami was careful to explain that his movement was not intended to be anti-Muslim in any way. The end of the year was marked by a riot in Howrah town, caused by the discovery of the carcass of a pig in a mosque.

Revolutionary crime.

The other disquieting feature of the political situation, was the recrudescence of revolutionary crime and activity almost simultaneously with the change in the policy of the Congress movement. Government had information, early in the year, that some ex-revolutionaries in East Bengal were again engaging in loot and devoting part of it to political purposes, and that many of the ex-detenus were discussing the desirability of renewing revolutionary activity on the old lines. About the same time, it was discovered that bayonets of German manufacture were being imported into the country. From the beginning of the hot weather a series of armed dacoities, culminating in the murder of the Post Master of the Sankharitola Post Office, in broad daylight, took place in Calcutta and its outskirts, in which the methods employed were remarkably similar

to those of the old revolutionary gangs. The arrest of the murderer in the last case and the receipt of further definite information enabled Government to institute a conspiracy case under section 120B read with sections 302, 392, 395 and 396, Indian Penal Code, against 10 others. Evidence was also forthcoming of the inauguration of Asrams in various places on the model of the Asrams of the old revolutionary days and of the close connection of the organisers of these with each other. The situation was clearly assuming a serious aspect, and on the 20th August the Hon'ble Mr. Stephenson, in opposing a resolution advocating the release of political prisoners in the Legislative Council, stated that Government had evidence of a widespread revolutionary conspiracy. On the 21st of August His Excellency, in proroguing the Council, pointed out the implications of such a movement and issued a warning. "The crimes of violence which have, in the last few months, deeply shocked the public of Calcutta," he said, "have generally been assumed to have been in all cases the acts of ordinary criminals of the *goonda* type. The latest murder in the Post Office at Sankharitola and the trial and conviction of one of the gang who committed the murder has revealed to the public the workings of organised revolutionary societies of which Bengal has had such an unhappy experience in the past. The revival of a menace, which many will remember as a hideous nightmare of the past, and which every one hoped had gone for ever, has created a situation in which the Government will require in an exceptional degree the support of the public. The contaminating influence of these gangs of fanatical idealists, who adopt terrorism through robbery and assassination as their weapon, is a danger to the younger generation from which no family can feel altogether immune. A week ago the latest victim of this sinister conspiracy told in the dock the story of how he was sought out by those whom he acknowledged as his leaders and ordered to join with others in a robbery which led to the murder of a perfectly innocent man." "This is no case," he continued, "of mere political opposition, of criticism of Government or seditious propaganda. It is a conspiracy of dangerous fanatical criminals amongst whom violence is an acknowledged creed and terrorism a deliberate policy, whose agents are trained in robbery and murder, whose victims are selected without motive or discrimination and who constitute a danger to every household in the country."

His Excellency's speech led to considerable comment, much of which revealed a scepticism as to the seriousness of the situation. The demand for further information was only natural, and the Hon'ble Mr. Stephenson, therefore, invited representatives of the press of the province to meet him and laid before them, as far as was possible, the kind of information on which the opinion of Government was based, in the hope that they would help to create an atmosphere inimical to revolutionary crime. By the middle of the following month it became evident that strong measures alone could avert another outbreak of political crime and assassination, and the detention of 15 of the leaders of the revolutionary movement under Regulation III of 1818 was sanctioned. Many of them happened to have been connected with the old revolutionary movement, and it was widely alleged in criticism of Government action, that their revolutionary past was their only offence and that they had been penalised for their political activities on behalf of the Swarajya party which they had espoused. There was, of course, no truth whatever in these allegations, for throughout the elections Government remained strictly neutral. Nor was it without the greatest reluctance that Government felt compelled to resort to an emergency law. In a *communiqué* issued a few days later in explanation of the action taken, it was frankly admitted that they acted under this law not from choice but from necessity. "In weighing the undoubted objections to detention in safe custody without trial," said the *communiqué*, "the Governor in Council is forced to consider whether this is a greater evil than the alternatives which are presented. These involve, on the one hand, the gravest risk to the lives of his officers and members of the public. . . . and, on the other hand, the exposure to danger of immature youths who in the course of their education are in most cases unavoidably removed from the care of their parents. The Governor in Council holds incontestable proof of instances of boys recently misled in this way. . . . In deciding that the evil of detention in custody of a limited number of persons without regular trial is the lesser of the two evils with which he is confronted, the Governor in Council believes that he will have on his side the support of the people of this province." It was announced, at the same time, that to avoid any mistakes the papers in each case would be placed before two Judges for their advice

The elections and parties.

Meanwhile active preparations were in progress for the forthcoming elections to the second reformed Legislative Council

in the middle of November. Mr. Gandhi had, as we have seen, launched his non-co-operation programme before the elections to the first reformed legislatures took place. The first outcome of it was an announcement in June 1920 by 23 prospective Hindu candidates that in view of the resolution passed by the Congress they did not propose to offer themselves for election. Side by side with abstention from candidature, there was a movement for discrediting the Council by securing the return of unknown men of no social status. Propaganda in the districts was not of an open character, but was carried on by the exercise of considerable social pressure, and the results were so far successful that from time to time intending candidates announced their intention to boycott the Council, and six persons of no social status were returned by large majorities over well-known local men. The effect of the movement was more strongly felt in the case of the Muhammadan constituencies owing to the intense feeling over the Khilafat question, but there is little doubt that the whole election was generally affected by it. By September 1923, as we have seen, the policy of Council boycott had collapsed and been replaced by entry into the Council for the purpose of obstruction. Throughout the year the Swarajists were organising, and when finally the Delhi Congress accepted the principle of Council entry, the Swarajist forces were ready to take the field. It had originally been in contemplation that every seat would be contested, but when nominations were completed the position was far from clear. It was claimed that 26 non-Muhammadans and 21 Muhammadans were Swarajists, but how many of these were actually obstructionists was not known. There were obvious advantages which the Swarajists could offer to those who either subscribed to the Swaraj creed, which had been considerably modified to rope in men of more moderate views, who agreed to give general support to the Swaraj party in opposition to measures of law and order.

Moderate opinion, on the other hand, was both unorganised and disunited. As early as December 1922, when the reforms had been at work for less than two years, the President of the National Liberal Federation had criticised the position under the constitution from various points of view. He had advocated greater indianization of the Imperial Services and their control by the Government of India, better treatment of Indians overseas, and acceleration of the pace of the reforms by the grant of provincial autonomy. At the same time he had the frankness to admit that in certain provinces the majority in the Councils had

shown that they could not be trusted to treat the minority with fairness and equity and until parties had been evolved a parliamentary constitution could not successfully work. "In the country at large," he said, "people are mostly under the spell of that pious doctrine of inexperience—unity. A vague hankering after a reconciliation of all parties and the honours of a universal peacemaker is the dominant characteristic of a considerable number of people in public life, of attractive personality and decided talent but unwilling to recognise that Indian politics have come into a phase of reality in which unity is not only impossible but is a sure sign of inefficiency. . As soon as the votes are polled and the names of successful candidates announced, it ought to be possible, as in other countries, to calculate the exact distribution of parties in the legislatures. Not knowing how many their followers are, Ministers, supposed to represent the non-official part of the legislature, are compelled to look upon the official nominated element as the nucleus of their voting strength, hoping by individual negotiation to beat up a few more recruits on each occasion, a most distressing situation for those who are expected to build up the strength of the popular party. How dare we talk of full parliamentary institutions so long as nine out of ten politicians will refuse to take a name, be classified or acknowledge a leader?" Many Moderates overlooked the reservations and difficulties in the way of immediate constitutional advance and adopted the cry for immediate provincial autonomy, and this attitude of mind received support from disappointment with the working of the reforms. The three years covered by the first Council were years of deficiency budgets and although excellent work had been done, in no direction were the Ministers able to carry out effectively such a policy as might have won popularity for themselves or the system they represented. On the other hand, there was a disposition to identify Ministers with the bureaucracy for no other reason than that they had generally supported their colleagues in the executive half of Government. The newspaper agitation created over the certification of the salt tax and the Kenya question was not without its effect, though neither of these questions was a real issue in this province. All these factors combined to encourage the growth of separate groups among the Moderates. Early in the year, there had been some talk of an independent party being formed under the leadership of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee with which Mr. C. R. Das was to co-operate. One section of the Moderate press which had indulged in continual vilification of the Ministers, exhorted the "Independent Liberals," as distinguished from "Ministerial Moderates," to make

common cause with the Swarajya party in order to show that India was not satisfied with the reforms.

When the election came, therefore, the Swarajists had opposed to them, a disorganised band of non-obstructionist candidates of varying shades of moderate or extreme opinion and absolutely oblivious of the necessity of sinking differences on minor issues to secure unity and organisation. In the Muhammadan constituencies also, a large number of candidates stood as ostensible Swaraj candidates, partly because they had worked together with the Swarajists over the Khilafat question, and partly, to get the advantage of their party organisation. The result was that the elections were marked throughout by solidarity on the part of the Swarajists who never put forward more than one candidate in any constituency, and division among the Moderates, of whom there were as many as five or six in one. The situation was complicated by the fact that some who did not label themselves Swarajists received the active assistance of the party, while several Swarajists gave out that they did not actually believe in the Swaraj creed. It was, therefore, at no time possible to make any forecast of the result with any pretentions to accuracy, and even after the elections were over, it was not known how some of the members would group themselves. The results showed, however, that the Swarajists, though representing a minority of the electorate, and in a minority in the Council, were the only party with a solid nucleus of votes behind them on which reliance could be placed. Subsequent developments helped them not only to consolidate their ranks but to gain fresh adherents.

The elections gave indications both of better organisation for bringing voters to the polls and of greater interest taken in politics. In the urban constituencies the percentage of votes polled was extremely satisfactory, and the same might be said of some of the rural constituencies, considering the distances, and the difficulties of communication. Over the whole electorate for the Council, the percentage of votes polled in contested constituencies to the number of voters was 39, which must be regarded as satisfactory. Of electioneering as it is understood in England, there was, however, little. Canvassing, specially on the Swarajist side, was indeed, well organised and effective, but except in Calcutta, and the large towns, there was little public speaking to explain the

programmes of the candidates. Communal and religious appeals were in evidence and in some places a distinct anti-landlord tendency displayed itself, but for the most part, the anti-reform candidates contented themselves with fastening the blame for all the supposed ills of the people on Government and the bureaucracy.

II.—The Press.

A brief account of literary publications, and their volume, will be found in the section on literature and the press in Part II of this report. It is intended here to refer only to certain tendencies in political journalism which it is necessary to understand in order to appreciate some aspects of the political situation. The repeal of the Press Act of 1910 which had been visited with such vigorous denunciation in the past did not seem to elicit much enthusiasm. One influential paper remarked that its repeal or retention could have no practical bearing on the section of the press likely to feel its terrors, as the Act had lately, oftener than not, failed to " strangle independent expression of opinion in the nationalist papers," and a tendency displayed itself of criticising the sedition and defamation sections of the Penal Code as if these were not ordinary features of the law in any other free country. The liberty of the press implies a corresponding responsibility on their part to keep within the bounds of legitimate criticism, and to avoid creating or encouraging revolutionary ideas, and though the line is, admittedly, not always easy to draw, any Government would be bound to protect itself and its officers by having recourse to the ordinary law where circumstances necessitate it. Out of five prosecutions sanctioned during the year 1923 under these sections, three resulted in conviction, one was withdrawn on submission of an apology, and only one failed, on the ground that it was not clear whether the writer's intention was to propagate sedition or to extol bravery. There were, on the other hand, scores of articles whose tendency was distinctly the encouragement of revolutionary ideas in respect of which no action was taken because they might be considered to be on the border line. These facts hardly justify the constant insinuation that Government take every opportunity of gagging the press.

Throughout the year a stream of Bolshevik literature continued to find its way to this country. The propaganda was directed

Bolshevik propaganda.

mainly to Congress circles, who were told that British dominion could only be overthrown by a violent revolution and that workers and peasants were alone capable of carrying such a revolution to success. They were urged, at the same time, to adopt the ideal of a democratic republic, independent of foreign control. That such teachings had a not inconsiderable effect on opinion is evident from the attention they have received in one form or another from different sections of Indian journalism. The idea of improving the condition of the labouring and agricultural classes appeals to the generous instincts of the public and the implications of the propaganda are not always therefore realised. When Mr. C. R. Das published his Council entry programme in the autumn of 1922, to which reference has been made before, one journal expressed the view that he had borrowed his ideas from the notorious communist Manabendra Nath Roy, that though the means might be different, they both aimed at the destruction of the British Raj and the establishment of a chaotic Swaraj. Mr. Das's speech at the Trade Union Congress at Lahore in March 1923, in which he declared that democracy had never been tried in the world and denounced the attitude of the middle classes towards labourers in India, also caused a passing apprehension. For the most part, however, the attitude of newspapers generally remained one of sympathetic tolerance.

On the other hand, a group of vernacular papers, conducted with great literary excellence, continued to promote Bolshevik ideas with much vigour. One of them, which was prosecuted at the beginning of the year, fulminated in excellent style against the shackles of orthodox ideas of society and religion and called, in the name of humanity, upon the youth of the country to spread the poison all over the world and let the household of peace be burnt up. "See," it cried, "there is oppression sitting assuming its dreadful aspect. The rich man with his riches, the strong man with his lathi, the Kazi and the Pandit with their Shastras." Another pointed out that reawakening meant the extinction of the middle classes, that real work lay outside the Councils, amongst coolies and peasants, who, once united, could carry everything before them. They must be made to taste of power and the non-co-operators must help to remove the weight of age-long oppression from off their heads. "We want political freedom," it said, "that is, we

want that all power should be transferred from the hands of the foreign ruling community into our hands. But who are those 'we'? The middle classes have not strength enough to rescue the country from foreigners, so we must bring over to our side the majority of the population—the cultivators and labourers." From the use of the masses as a means to an end there is a gradual development to the idea of a class war and of the necessity of rousing the masses by promises of better things they would enjoy. "Those who enjoy profits, varying from 200 or 300 per cent. by establishing mills and factories and whose mill hands pass their lives in tattered clothes and dark rooms, never think that most of the money they earn ought morally to go to those labourers and that the money they spend on luxury is really stolen money. We often hear them speak of Swaraj. To them Swaraj means a monopoly of committing this theft. It is high time to make it clear to them that Swaraj and theft cannot go hand in hand." Again with reference to the agricultural population we read: "We know under what conditions they work in the fields; but the fruit of their labour is not theirs. After meeting the demands of the zemindar, the mahajan and others, hardly anything is left to them and their families. We want a Swaraj under which it will be impossible for zemindars and mahajans to rob the poor agriculturist of everything." How this desirable state of things is to be brought about is not stated, but later still, we read that evasive philosophical arguments are useless. "It must also be stated whether they will receive the treatment of human beings under Swaraj, become owners of the land they till, participate in the profits of the mills and factories in which they work, receive medical aid and education. . . . The non-co-operation leaders must make these points clear and instead of answering themselves the questions whether violence is good or non-violence is good, leave the decision to the disposition of the people." Again "our patriots have no objection to political revolution, but they get frightened as soon as they hear of social and economic revolutions, as this will affect their purses. Such mentality is inimical to patriotic service." In yet another paper we read that "the present non-co-operator proprietors of the Congress feel apprehensive at the bare mention of establishing organisations for agriculturists and labourers. They say these things are the beginnings of Bolshevism and therefore are unacceptable. It is the Swarajya party which has given a definite lead in this respect." From

time to time communications from known Bolshevists abroad found their way to the columns of well-known journals. In one such letter from Germany it is pointed out that the future of Indian Swaraj depends on the masses. " The time for preaching the cult of freedom, by establishing secret societies like formerly is now past. Work must be done in public. . . . Mass action is one of the principal weapons in the present war for freedom."

These extracts are illustrative and it is unnecessary to multiply them. They suffice to give some indication of the trend of ideas that is sought to be created. One remarkable fact, however, is that while so much attention has been paid to Bolshevik theory, Bolshevik practice appears to have received practically no attention at all.

The press and anarchical crime.

The transition from such teachings to violent action with the object of bringing about a revolution is easy. There were indications in some articles which appeared in the press that those who believed in such action were taking heart. While lip service to non-violence continued to be paid, it began more and more to be a cloak for the propagation of ideas of a very different nature. The ultimate intention could not be in doubt. As one article in a monthly magazine, contributed from Germany, pointed out, the failure of efforts at revolution in 1915-16 taught the revolutionaries that they had proceeded on a wrong philosophy in dissociating themselves from the masses. " Alas, we could not then realise that we were working only as agents of bourgeois interests." One or two vernacular papers made a special feature of the reminiscences of ex-revolutionaries. Throughout the year the slow doping of the public mind by means of occasional articles in praise of old revolutionaries went on. It was not, however, till His Excellency the Governor issued his warning in Council about the recrudescence of revolutionary crime, and the favourable reception accorded to the Hon'ble Mr. Stephenson's appeal to the journalists to create an atmosphere inimical to such crimes, that an organised propaganda began in the columns of a group of journals for the purpose of counteracting their effects.

The anniversary of the death of the revolutionary, Jotindra Nath Mukherjea, at Balasore, whose revolutionary exploits and connection with the German conspiracy are set out in the Rowlatt Committee's report, provided a convenient starting point. His portraits were published in different papers, he was held up as a living embodiment of the

principles of the Gita, compared with Sher Shah, Pratap Singh, Pratapaditya and Sivaji, and commended for teaching Bengal how life may be fulfilled by welcoming death. It was stated that while Tilak's patriotism, Gandhi's patriotism and Arabindo's patriotism, might possibly be measured, Jotindra's patriotism was absolutely unmeasurable. Other articles rose to still more lyric heights. He was extolled as the idol of Bengal's youth. " The country is not ready," " you must first do constructive work are," one reads, " the usual cants through which the pleasure loving and the peaceful mind gets a peep at the real world. Jotindra Nath did not succumb to this delusion. " The apotheosis of Jotindra Nath was followed by that of Chittapriya Roy Choudhury (killed at Balasore), Nirendra Chandra Das Gupta, Vinyak Savarkar, Monoranjan Sen Gupta and other well-known revolutionaries. " Will all the value of this stream of blood shed by heroes be lost in the dust?" it was asked and much more in the same strain. One group of papers made itself specially prominent in this type of propaganda, but it is a matter of real regret that even respectable periodicals were not slow to lend their pages to it. It is easy to wax eloquent over the right to freedom of opinion. It is not so easy, for those who feel any responsibility for the peaceful evolution of the country, to overlook the immense harm that is caused to immature and emotional youths by this kind of propaganda.

Home and foreign politics and the press.

It was only one section of the vernacular press, however, which devoted itself to pernicious propaganda of this kind. The saner portion of the press hardly seemed to be alive to such propaganda, and when it was brought to their notice, discountenanced it. They were concerned mainly with the controversy about the policy of boycotting the Councils, *versus* that of Council entry, with the breach between the no-changers and Swarajists, with the Kenya decision, the Lausanne treaty and later with the proceedings of the Imperial Conference. The demands of national self-respect were, naturally, urged with great force in these connections, but so far as the general tone of distrust of Government and the bureaucracy which have characterised the Indian press is concerned, there is little improvement to record. The solicitude of the Government of India to secure a just treaty with Turkey received some recognition, but there were many who saw only a sinister policy behind it.

III.—Police and Crime.

Crime and poverty.

The correlation of crime and poverty has often been sought to be defined by criminal statisticians, and if decreasing crime were always an index of increasing prosperity, the crime figures of this province outside Calcutta during the last three years would be a matter for congratulation. The factors that affect crime are, however, too complicated to enable any such simple explanation, for it is sometimes found that widespread economic distress synchronises with decrease in crime. Thus, in 1920, in spite of such distress, both cognisable and non-cognisable cases showed a large decrease, and what is still more remarkable, serious crimes, which are peculiarly responsive to variations in economic conditions, showed the same result. Murder and rioting, it is true, showed slight increases, but there was a decrease of over a hundred in reported dacoities. The fact is that in the rapidly changing conditions of this province no single cause is adequate to explain the variations in any particular year, and the figures of a series of years must be examined and compared with other conditions in order to enable any general conclusions to be framed.

Political conditions and crime.

Certain causes, however, lie on the surface. If dacoity, murder and rioting, are responsive to economic variations, they are still more responsive to variations in political conditions. In 1921, though economic conditions were more favourable than in the previous year and there was a still further decline in the total volume of cognisable and non-cognisable crime, the figures of serious crime showed an alarming increase. Thus dacoities rose from 572 to 716, murder from 399 to 413, culpable homicide from 217 to 243 and rioting, most significant of all, from 504 to 613. It would be taking a very superficial view to ascribe the fall in the volume of total crime to improved economic conditions, for there are clear and definite political conditions which account for it. Political activities, during the year, were directed mainly to two objects, viz., to organising civil disobedience and the boycott of courts of justice. In furtherance of the first aim, widespread propaganda was indulged in to bring lawful authority into contempt. All kinds of rumours filled the air, and incredible as it might seem, there were large sections of ignorant people who were inclined to believe the story that the British Raj had ceased to exist

and a Gandhi Raj had come into power. In furtherance of the second aim, arbitration courts were started at various places to which villagers were induced to take their cases instead of to the regular courts of justice; the village police who had felt the pinch of the economic conditions and were disaffected, were dissuaded from reporting crime, and in the minds of certain sections of the people an impression had been created that better and speedier justice was to be obtained from these village courts than from ordinary courts established by law. It is only by the slow process of experience that the contrary has been proved, but such facts explain both the fall in the total volume of crime and the large increases in certain classes of crime which find encouragement from every gust of lawless atmosphere.

1922. Throughout 1922 similar causes operated to bring about similar phenomena. While agricultural and economic conditions showed a marked improvement, the aftermath of the previous year's fierce propaganda remained. There was thus a further decrease in the total volume of reported crime which might be ascribed to both these causes. The spirit of lawlessness, however, which once raised is not again easily brought under control, manifested itself in the remarkable increases under the heads of rioting and unlawful assembly, and dacoities, the former increasing from 613 to 946 and the latter from 716 to 896. Of the figures of rioting, only a third related to land disputes. Two significant features of the year's crime should be noted, viz., the reappearance of communal rioting and the commission of dacoities in Eastern Bengal by mixed gangs of young men of the bhadralok class and ordinary criminals.

1923. At the moment of writing this report, the crime figures of 1923 are not available.

Sonthal unrest in Midnapore and Bankura. The Sonthal unrest in the districts of Bankura and Midnapore in the spring deserves some notice. For some time past the relations between the Sonthals and their landlords in the Silda pargana in the north-west of the Midnapore district had been extremely strained over the question of forest rights. Intimidation, arson, murder had resulted and, early in 1922, the Additional Magistrate, in the interests of the peace of the district, intervened and endeavoured to effect a settlement which would be satisfactory to both parties. Terms of settlement were

drawn up and agreed to by representatives of both parties, but eventually the influence of the non-co-operators prevented the acceptance of these terms by the tenants. The trouble in 1923 originated in disputes with a zemindar regarding jungle rights and focussed itself on the right claimed by Sonthal tenants to take fish from private tanks. The movement was stimulated by the rivalry between two rival claimants to an estate in Midnapore, one of whom made promises to tenants regarding fishing rights. Many of the Sonthals in the area appear to have been under the impression that their right to fish in these tanks had been recognised by zemindars. Incitement from non-co-operation preachers was not wanting, and the result was that tanks were looted in the particular estate. The contagion soon spread to other places, where organised looting by mobs of several thousand Sonthals began to take place. In parts of Midnapore and Bankura indiscriminate jungle cutting also took place, the offenders being chiefly men from the former district. The spirit of lawlessness manifested itself in several forcible rescues of prisoners from police custody, and an attack on the motor car in which the District Magistrate of Midnapore and the Superintendent of Police were proceeding to the disturbed area. The rapidity with which the movement spread was due mainly to the fact that these areas, as a result of protracted friction between landlords and tenants and the activity of non-co-operators, were already ripe for trouble. The prompt action taken by the local authorities, accompanied by the influence brought to bear on the local Sonthals through their headmen, prevented the movement from spreading.

At the other end of the province in the Bakarganj district an armed police guard, who were assisting an Excise Inspector to make arrests in a salt detection case, were attacked by villagers, as a result of which one constable and one peon were seriously injured and three rioters were killed. The seizure of illicitly manufactured salt would have been carried out peacefully had not an agitator collected a crowd and excited it to violence.

Bhadralok crime.

As regards dacoities, the beginning of the year showed a striking increase in the number of reported dacoities, an increase which happily was not maintained. But the most disquieting feature was the increasing number of cases in which bhadralok youths appear to have placed

themselves at the head of professional gangs for the commission of dacoities. Later in the year crimes of a purely revolutionary type, to which reference has been made before, developed, mainly in Calcutta and its surroundings. It has been widely suggested that unemployment is the sole cause of such crimes. With regard to revolutionary crimes there is absolutely nothing to justify the suggestion. As regards the rest, if the theory has any basis, it should be remembered that while the State may be responsible for opening up avenues of employment and for providing the kind of teaching that will enable opportunities provided to be made full use of, it is no part of the State's function to provide employment directly. The Departments of Industries and Education and the Ministers responsible for them are giving the matters every attention. Meanwhile, it would be unfortunate if a sentimental regard for criminals were to result in the withholding of the protection which the victims of such crimes are entitled to claim from Government.

The discipline of the force.

As might be readily imagined, the police had, during the period of the non-co-operation agitation, to face peculiar difficulties. Not only were they called upon to discharge their duties under circumstances of great difficulty, but they were continually subjected to vilification and abuse, and that at a time when the strain of the economic situation affected them severely. Throughout the exacting time they acquitted themselves with credit. Misconduct on the part of any member of the force, however humble, sullies the good name of the force as a whole and efforts have been directed to the enforcement of a higher standard of conduct. It is satisfactory that there has been a gradual decrease in the number both of criminal complaints and civil suits brought against the force, and if there has been a slight increase in the number of departmental punishments, it is due, mainly, to the attempt to enforce a higher standard of discipline. Strict instructions were issued warning all officers of the necessity of courtesy and civility towards the public and special stress was laid on this matter in lectures delivered to officers and men under training at the Sardah School. Much still remains to be done to ensure satisfactory conditions for the police force, but sufficient funds have not been forthcoming for the purpose and expenditure has had to be restricted to the most urgent needs of the Department.

IV.—Finance.

The financial history of Bengal in the first three years of the Reforms, viz., that covered by the first elected Council, is a record of the endeavour to balance income and expenditure by rigid curtailment of expenditure on the one hand, and by increased taxation on the other. The financial settlement, as recommended by the Meston Committee and accepted by the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, left the province with sources of income which were, on the whole, very inelastic. The standard of expenditure allowed to it by the Government of India as usual was far less than its position justified, despite the fact that the reformed Government was required to take over the entire financial responsibility for the development of two costly institutions for which the Government of India had hitherto been responsible, viz., the two Universities of Calcutta and Dacca. In addition, the province was saddled with a tribute of Rs. 63 lakhs.

Budget of 1921-22.

The result was that when Sir John Kerr presented the first budget under the Reforms he was faced with a deficit of Rs. 2,08,00,000. Under the heads of revenue assigned to this province the receipts were estimated at Rs. 10,81,68,000, while expenditure charged to revenue amounted to Rs. 12,89,52,000. The main causes for the increased expenditure were the increased pay which it was necessary to give to all the services to meet the economic situation arising out of the war (a sum of Rs. 45½ lakhs alone being set apart for the revision of pay of ministerial and menial establishments) and the fact that during the war the expenditure had been rigidly kept under check and not only new developments stopped but measures of ordinary maintenance suspended or curtailed. The position was a difficult one; it was recognised that it would not be fair to prejudice the chances of the success of the Reforms by asking the new Council to face fresh taxation at such an early stage, and Sir John Kerr proposed to meet the deficit, therefore, out of the provincial balances which then stood at Rs. 248 lakhs, in the hope that before the time came to prepare another budget there would be an improvement in receipts and a diminution in liabilities.

By the time the budget for 1922-23 came to be prepared it was clear, however, that these expectations were not likely to be realised.

As a result of the protests of the local Government the Central Government agreed to waive the contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs for a period of three years, but the general dullness of trade and disturbed political situation continued and kept the receipts low. Attention was then directed to economy in administration and the different departments of Government were subjected to rigid scrutiny to see what retrenchments were possible. It was decided that the creation of the new district of Hijli should remain in abeyance, that the activities of the Public Works Department would be confined only to works in progress, that no new works would be taken up and that the Settlement programme should be reduced. In these and other ways it was thought that retrenchment of Rs. 89½ lakhs would eventually be secured. As against this, there were some unavoidable increases amounting in all to Rs. 17 lakhs, of which Rs. 11½ lakhs was for education. Nevertheless, even at this reduced level of efficiency, there was a prospective deficit of Rs. 72½ lakhs and it was no longer possible to avoid taxation. Three taxation bills were, therefore, introduced in February 1922, two of them for amending the Stamp and the Court Fees Acts, and the third for imposing a tax on amusements and betting. It was estimated that the new duties would bring in over a crore and fifty lakhs and thus leave a surplus of between Rs. 40 and Rs. 50 lakhs after wiping out the deficit, to enable the restoration of the retrenchments on the transferred side and some of the more urgent ones on the reserved side.

Budget of 1922-23.

When the budget of 1922-23 came to be presented these anticipations were still found to be too optimistic. The revised estimates for 1921-22 showed a large decrease of over Rs. 76 lakhs in receipts, of which Rs. 58 lakhs were ascribable to Land Revenue, Excise and Stamps. On the expenditure side there was a saving of over Rs. 76½ lakhs on the original estimates due to retrenchments. Faced with these very uncomfortable facts the Finance Department was compelled to prune the departmental budgets ruthlessly in spite of protests from Members and Ministers alike, and to provide only for the bare needs of the administration. Even so, and after budgeting for a slight improvement in receipts and still further retrenchment in expenditure the net result was a prospective deficit of Rs. 120 lakhs. The taxation bills had still to be passed by the Council and meanwhile the anticipations of receipts

had to be modified, as a result of certain changes made by the Select Committee, to Rs. 140 lakhs. It was hoped that with the yield of these taxation bills equilibrium would be restored and a surplus of Rs. 20 lakhs would be available and that, at any rate, this would be the last year of deficit budgets. In July and August 1922 supplementary demands were presented in Council for the utilisation of the anticipated surplus and a certain amount of the provincial balances to the extent of Rs. 44½ lakhs. The original budget, together with the new taxation and supplementary grants provided then for a revenue of Rs. 10,43,16,000 and expenditure of Rs. 10,68,74,000, the deficit being met from the balance.

Yet once more anticipations were disappointed. The depression in trade and industry continued to exercise a blighting influence on receipts, and by September it was evident that the yield of the increased stamp duties and the amusement tax was likely to belie expectations. It was necessary, therefore, to take immediate measures to enforce all possible economy by retrenchment, wherever possible and by suspending the expenditure passed by the Council on schemes which had not been put into operation or to which Government were not committed.

Budget of 1923-24.

It was most unfortunate that these measures had to be taken, but not to have taken them would have resulted in a deficit of more than a crore. The amount saved by retrenchment would amount, it was thought, to Rs. 49 lakhs, 33 of which represented savings in the original budget and the balance savings in the supplementary estimates. At the time the budget of 1923-24 was presented, the result of the previous year's working was not accurately known, and it was estimated that taking these retrenchments into account the year would close with a deficit of over Rs. 16½ lakhs, which would have to be met out of the provincial balances. In presenting the budget for that year the Hon'ble Mr. Donald had to budget again for what he thought would be a deficit year. After remarking that he had drawn up his estimates on cautious lines in view of the uncertainty of the economic situation and budgeted for a revenue and expenditure, respectively, of Rs. 10,15,57,000 and Rs. 10,21,66,000, he said: "We have made no provision for new schemes. Our only new item of expenditure in next year's budget is a provision of Rs. 4½ lakhs for the election of the

new Legislative Council. Subject to this and to the normal growth of expenditure, no provision has been made for any additional expenditure. In the result the expenditure is Rs. 6,09,000 over our revenue." Compared to the previous year the deficit was small and the Retrenchment Committee's report was expected to secure further economies. There was ground for hoping that, in these circumstances, further economies would enable a deficit to be avoided. But the position was still unsatisfactory. There was no room for development or progress.

Later and more accurate information showed, however, that the actual income in 1922-23 was nearly Rs. 8½ lakhs over the revised estimate, and that in every department expenditure, owing to strict economy, fell short of the estimate of expenditure. The net result of the year's operations on all accounts was a surplus of Rs. 23,41,000. At the time of writing this report the Hon'ble Finance Member has just made his statement to Council. That statement shows that the revised figures at the beginning of the year 1923-24 of the receipts and expenditure, respectively, were Rs. 10,20,18,000 and Rs. 10,14,65,000. Supplementary estimates were presented in July and August 1923, adding just over Rs. 10 lakhs to the expenditure, and the deficit of Rs. 4½ lakhs was to be met out of the balances. Actual results have, however, been better than anticipations, and it is estimated that in the year which is coming to a close the expenditure will amount to Rs. 10,06,03,000 and receipts to Rs. 10,36,84,000, thus leaving a sum of over Rs. 30 lakhs on the credit side.

Though the estimates for 1924-25 lie beyond the purview of this report it might be stated that after making provision for new schemes to the extent of Rs. 35,89,000 the Finance Member anticipates a small excess of half a lakh over expenditure. On the 1st of April 1921, the balances stood, as the Finance Member pointed out in the course of his speech, at nearly Rs. 2½ crores; on the same day two years later they had dwindled to Rs. 90,92,000. In 1921-22 expenditure exceeded income by Rs. 170½ lakhs and in the following two years, thanks to taxation, retrenchment, and relief of payment to the Government of India, income exceeded expenditure and the closing balance is again expected to show a sum of Rs. 1,21,73,000 on the credit side in 1923-24.

The brief review given above justifies some amount of optimism for the future. The last three years have been an unceasing struggle against deficits, and when criticism is levelled against the so-called obstructive habits of the Finance Department, it should, in fairness, be remembered that sound finance forms the very foundation of good government and it is the duty of that department to secure it. If parsimonious economy has been insisted upon in the past, it is only that they may be succeeded by years of plenty. The most awkward corner has now been turned and for the first time in four years a budget has been presented which, after providing for some new schemes, not only balances but leaves something over. At the same time, the provincial balances have been improved and it is possible now to look forward to a policy of progressive development in place of one of marking time.

Retrenchment.

As already indicated, retrenchment was undertaken by Government on its own initiative from the very beginning, and in the first two years of Reforms economies to the extent of Rs. 89 and Rs. 49 lakhs, respectively, were effected. These retrenchments had nothing to do with the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, which was appointed in the autumn of 1922 and submitted its report early in 1923. A statement of the decisions of Government on the somewhat sweeping recommendations of that Committee is under preparation and will be placed before the Council shortly. It is difficult to refer to any particular head and say how much represents actual retrenchment during the year, because it will take time for the recommendations which have been accepted to have full effect. In the matter of allowances and contingencies considerable reductions have already been effected and further reductions will be possible. Much of the savings of about Rs. 2 lakhs each effected under Agriculture and Public Health is due to the retrenchment proposals, but the most notable economy has been effected under Police, resulting in a saving of as much as Rs. 12 lakhs. It can now be asserted with some confidence that expenditure has been retrenched to the very minimum. This does not, of course, mean that the total budget estimate, leaving out the new schemes, is less than before, for there is normal development to provide for.

The Meston Settlement.

Reference has been made at the beginning of this section to the tribute of Rs. 63 lakhs, which, under the Meston Settlement, is payable

annually by this Government to the Central Government. Speaking to the Council on November 21st, 1921, His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay said with reference to the new taxation proposals: "It must not be supposed for one moment that a decision of this Council to raise fresh revenue for carrying on the administration for the time being, is to be regarded as an acquiescence on its part in the present settlement. Very far from it. Neither the Council nor Government have ever departed from the view that the Settlement ought to have been such as to permit the continuance of the administration on existing lines without the imposition of additional taxation. And our position is this, that if to meet the immediate emergency with which we are faced, we are prepared to raise fresh revenue and to devote it to meeting our existing deficit, we do so still maintaining that we have a moral claim to further relief, and in that view we regard the allocation of the proceeds of new taxation to the meeting of our deficit as a purely temporary expedient." This is the position that the local Government have throughout taken in regard to the contribution required from this province. Their repeated protests resulted in its suspension for a period of three years, which have now elapsed, and the question will have to be discussed afresh. It is well, therefore, to explain that circumstances have done nothing to change the position that this Government have always taken up. As the Hon'ble Finance Member said in introducing the budget of 1924-25: "We have still hanging over our heads a liability of Rs. 63 lakhs to the Central Government, which, unless in the meantime we can secure some revision of the inequitable Meston Settlement, against which we have always protested, will become due next year. Members of the Council must realise that, until this liability has been removed, there can be no expansion of our expenditure in the direction we all desire. Our case for its removal is overwhelming. As I have already shown, we have retrenched our expenditure to the utmost limit; we have imposed new taxation on our people—and what is the result? If the contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs to the Central Government is again forced upon us, it will swallow up the bulk of the proceeds of our strenuous efforts to reduce expenditure and increase revenue. We should again be faced with a deficit and have nothing for development. Such a contingency is wholly unacceptable to us, and we shall fight against it to the utmost."

V.—Exports and Imports.

The hopes entertained at the close of the year 1922, that 1923 would see a satisfactory revival in Calcutta's trade with foreign countries were disappointed. The monsoon was a good one, food crops were abundant, exchange was fairly steady and serious boycotting quite dead; but conditions in Europe and the United Kingdom, Calcutta's best markets for the exchange of goods, were unsettled throughout the year and trade was consequently depressed, credits being restricted and money very tight. Though exports were better in each month of the year when compared with the figures for the corresponding periods in 1922, except in November, the total value for the year only increased from Rs. 110·13 crores to Rs. 123·27 crores, and this was due more to better prices obtained than to any great increase in volume of goods exported. In imports this conditions was reversed, for though the total value dropped from Rs. 85·04 crores to Rs. 78·42 crores, the deficit was accentuated by the lower prices ruling in many cases. The net result of Calcutta's trade in 1923 was an increase in the favourable trade balance from Rs. 25·09 crores to Rs. 44·85 crores.

Coasting trade. In coasting trade the total decreased from Rs. 45·22 crores to Rs. 35·26 crores. Imports recorded some advance, a heavy falling off in receipts of rice being well covered by very large imports of country-made cotton piece-goods from Bombay; but exports declined as a result of smaller shipments of rice to Sind—Karachi.

Gold and silver. Calcutta's transactions in treasure in the foreign trade resulted in an excess of imports over exports by nearly Rs. 2¼ crores. Imports declined from Rs. 2·67 crores to Rs. 2·55 crores, an improvement under silver from Rs. 2·04 crores to Rs. 2·38 crores being insufficient to cover the decrease under gold from Rs. 62·72 lakhs to Rs. 17·15 lakhs. Gold valued at Rs. 1·43 lakhs was exported against nothing in the previous year and shipment of silver increased from Rs. 60,000 only in 1922 to Rs. 30·33 lakhs.

Import trade. As already mentioned, the decline in the total value of the import trade while due chiefly to decreases in volume of most goods landed, was exaggerated by the fall in prices of nearly all imported articles, the lower values for cotton goods, iron and steel, mineral oil and tobacco

being most noticeable. Sugar was an exception, the quantity decreasing from 254,315 tons to 249,437 tons, but the value increasing from Rs. 5·98 crores to Rs. 7·48 crores. Imports of cotton piece-goods declined in volume from 818 million to 759 million yards, but the value dropped heavily from Rs. 27·16 crores to Rs. 25·18 crores. The decrease in value under iron and steel was from Rs. 7·22 crores to Rs. 6·07 crores, while the tonnage only declined from 270,724 to 264,508 tons, and another item was salt, which fell in value from Rs. 112 lakhs to Rs. 89 lakhs, although the quantity only contracted from 380,198 to 376,196 tons. Mineral oil imports were actually greater, advancing from 43·81 to 44·09 million gallons, but the value due to heavy price-cutting decreased from Rs. 2·92 crores to Rs. 2·90 crores. Tobacco imports also increased in quantity from 1·64 million to 1·80 million pounds, but suffered a fall in value from Rs. 76·59 lakhs to Rs. 70·49 lakhs. Imports of machinery and railway plant and rolling stock continued to decline, the former dropping further from Rs. 9·32 crores to Rs. 6·54 crores and the latter from Rs. 5·73 crores to Rs. 4·89 crores. There were practically no imports of wheat from Australia against Rs. 1·21 crores worth in 1922, and imports of brass, copper, rubber (chiefly tyres and tubes for motor cars), hardware, electrical instruments and liquors were much smaller. The only items recording noticeable increase in value were in articles imported by post, and spices, which rose, respectively, from Rs. 57 lakhs to Rs. 119 lakhs and from Rs. 78 lakhs to Rs. 116 lakhs. Motor cars increased in number from 1,371 to 2,316, mainly on account of larger imports of cheaper cars, as the value merely improved from Rs. 46 lakhs to Rs. 53 lakhs. There was a falling off in the total value of imports from the United Kingdom and the United States of America, but Germany, though embarrassed by the disordered state of her finances, slightly improved her trade with Calcutta. She increased her sales of cotton manufactures, instruments (chiefly electrical), aniline dyes and apparel sufficiently to cover decreases in her transactions in hardware, iron and steel, paints and colours, paper, wood pulp and salt.

Export trade.

The continued improvement in the total value of the export trade was secured more by higher prices obtained for nearly all articles exported than to any great increase in volume. Shipments of jute manufactures only increased in quantity from 649,854 to 736,562 tons, tea from

201 to 216 million pounds, and hides and skins from 26,924 to 29,884 tons, but the value helped by better prices ruling advanced from Rs. 37 crores, 15 crores and 3·46 crores to Rs. 43 crores, 21 crores and 4·55 crores, respectively. The only articles which recorded any very marked increase in quantity were rice, from 127,123 to 263,115 tons, cheap prices and abundant supplies encouraging shipments; and coal from 76,466 to 135,618 tons, owing to the removal of the embargo on exports at the beginning of the year; but even so the quantity shipped was trifling. Other large increases in quantity were recorded by lac from 427,155 to 530,817 cwts., and linseed from 185,130 to 227,634 tons, though on account of lower prices the value of the former only advanced from Rs. 8·95 crores to Rs. 10·51 crores and of the latter from Rs. 4·87 to Rs. 5·79 crores.

The raw jute crop was a poor one and exports contracted from 606,073 to 568,835 tons; higher prices, however, reduced the decline in value to a little more than Rs. 3 crores from Rs. 22 crores. Raw cotton shipments were very small, the decrease in value being more than Rs. 3 crores, and exports of myrobalans also declined. The United Kingdom and the United States of America increased the total value of their purchases from Calcutta, but Germany was compelled to reduce hers and to be content with 135,681 tons of raw jute against 151,349 tons in 1922. She managed, however, to secure most of the cow hides, increasing her supplies from 10,012 to 11,519 tons. The low prices ruling in Calcutta again resulted in large re-exports of sugar, though not to the same extent as in the previous year, the quantity decreasing from 16,095 tons to 14,189 tons, the bulk going to the United Kingdom, France and Ceylon.

Exchange.

The rate of 1*s.* 4*d.* and a fraction, which ruled at the close of 1922 held good with fractional changes, except for a rise to 1*s.* 5*d.* on the 24th and 25th January and a drop below 1*s.* 4*d.* on the 27th and 28th August, till the last week of November, when it rose to over 1*s.* 5*d.* and remained at that figure to the end of the year. The Imperial Bank's rate for demand loans which stood at 7 per cent. at the beginning of the year was raised to 8 per cent. on the 10th January, which ruled to the 25th May, when it was reduced to 7 per cent. It then dropped rapidly to 6 per cent. on the 31st May, 5 per cent. on the

6th June and 4 per cent. on the 28th June, at which it remained till the 15th November 1923, when it was again advanced to 5 per cent. A fortnight later it was raised to 6 per cent. and on the 20th December to 7 per cent., at which it stood till the end of the year.

VI.—Local Self-Government.

Mufassal Municipalities.

The total number of municipalities rose to 118 by the creation of two new municipalities at Rajbari and Gaibandha. The year under review has not seen any very marked improvement in the general level of municipal administration. While the affairs of certain municipalities continued on the whole to be managed satisfactorily, in many municipalities there was a failure on the part of the Municipal Commissioners and the executive to realise their responsibilities. There are unfortunately too many Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen who are prevented by their public or private business from affording the time required to look after municipal affairs. The result is that a great deal too much is left to a badly paid and inferior subordinate staff. In some towns, again, party spirit and faction based on personal considerations were rampant.

The income of most of the municipalities continued to be inadequate and in consequence there was not much scope for the fulfilment of many improvement schemes, such as water-supply, primary education, medical relief. Generally speaking, the incidence of taxation is low. If the local authorities are not content to stand still and are anxious to improve the amenities of life, they must be prepared to resort to higher taxation. A lead has been given in this direction by some municipalities, which have increased the rates and revised their assessments in a stringent manner.

The present Municipal Act has been in force for nearly forty years, and though still wide enough in its scope to meet the needs of many towns, it naturally fails to provide the wider range and scope which legislation in recent years has given to municipal administration in all parts of the world. To remedy this defect and to remove legal difficulties which the working of the present Act has brought to light, a consolidated Municipal Bill was introduced in the Local Council in August last. It not only gives increased independence to municipalities by the devolution of functions and powers from the State and

by the relaxation of internal control, but it supplements the present law by conferring ample powers to increase taxation, to enforce the improvement of insanitary buildings and areas, to prevent and control epidemic diseases, to regulate the sale of food-stuffs, to improve the registration of vital statistics and to encourage the expansion of primary education.

District Boards.

The District Board of Darjeeling commenced working, with an official Chairman, from the beginning of the year 1923-24. All the other District Boards had non-official Chairmen elected from among their own numbers. Deofficialisation has led to greater keenness at elections, for the office is one which commands considerable prestige and influence and every one who aspires to some local importance turns his eyes towards the District Board.

Except in the case of the 24-Parganas, where the work was disorganised owing to disputes about the election of the new Board and the delay in the confirmation of the present Chairman, the administration of the District Boards by non-official Chairmen, so far as their funds permit, was on the whole satisfactory. Most of the non-official Chairmen showed keen interest in their work and devoted a good deal of time to the discharge of their onerous duties, even at the sacrifice of their own profession. The members also evinced greater interest than before and it is reported from one district that the meetings which commence, as a rule, at about 2 or 3 P.M., often go on to a late hour of the night. It may be that the time is not always spent to the most useful purpose, but it furnishes a gratifying proof that local politics are attracting increased interest and attention.

The Boards have almost invariably done their best to spend their money to the greatest advantage, but the universal cry is that their funds are inadequate to meet the many pressing demands upon their resources. This fact is so obvious as hardly to need demonstration. The twenty-six District Boards of the province are primarily responsible for the health and convenience of a population of more than 42 millions in an area of 70,000 square miles. Their revenue in 1922-23 was a little more than Rs. 115 lakhs, which allows an expenditure of 4 annas one pie per head. With this paltry sum it is impossible to provide every

facility for water-supply, drainage, improved communications, education, sanitation and medical relief, etc., for which people in the urban areas pay nearly fifteen times as much. The question of augmenting the resources of District Boards was considered more than once by the conference of the representatives of District Boards, which is held annually. The conference was opposed to any increase in the land cess, but approved a proposal to levy a tax on carriages, including motor vehicles, and upon persons attending *melas* as well as upon the owners of such *melas*. It also proposed that District Boards should be empowered to levy license fees on private markets. A Bill providing for these measures as well as other matters was introduced into the Legislative Council in August 1923. There is no doubt that the income of District Boards will be increased if and when this Bill is passed into law, but the amount expected to be realised from these petty taxes will not be sufficient to meet the pressing needs of the people. The remedy lies in the organisation of local resources, for which ample scope is afforded by Union Boards. The Bengal Village Self-Government Act was enacted with the express purpose of creating village organisations to deal with sanitation, rural water-supply and such other village problems.

Village Self-Government.

The number of Union Committees declined in proportion as they gave place to Union Boards, but there were still 168 Union Committees working at the end of the year.

The aftermath of the non-co-operation movement which hampered the growth and development of Union Boards during the preceding year still persists and has left an under-current of opposition behind. Nevertheless, several new Union Boards were started during the year under review, and the number of Union Boards which are actually working is 1,264. The extension of the Union Board system is, however, unequal in different parts of the province, and the principal explanation of this inequality is the distribution of circle officers. It has sometimes been suggested that circle officers are not required until Union Boards are about to be established in the entire area of a subdivision or district. This view is mistaken and experience has shown that the pace of extension of the Village Self-Government Act must depend on the supply of circle officers. Owing to financial stringency it was not found

possible to provide the total number of circle officers required for the establishment of Union Boards throughout the Presidency. It has, therefore, been decided to concentrate the activities of those officers who are available at present to districts where there is manifest willingness on the part of the villagers to have Union Boards established. Great interest appears to be taken in Union Board elections, especially in the district of Dacca, where, it is reported, 29 candidates fought for six seats and 90 per cent. of the voters appeared at the polling stations. Many of the Union Boards, notably in parts of the Dacca and Burdwan Divisions, continued to do good and steady work in connection with village roads, distribution of medicine, improvement of water-supply and other aspects of village improvement, in spite of their limited resources. Broadly speaking, the year marked a distinct advance in the development of these self-governing institutions, many of which have already established themselves as an integral part of the system of local self-government.

Union Benches and Union Courts, which now number 195 and 81, respectively, are gradually becoming popular, and the villagers are appreciating the benefit of being able to settle their petty disputes at a minimum of cost and trouble.

Police functions exercised by Union Boards.

In keeping with the general policy of developing Union Boards as an integral element in village administration, certain responsibilities hitherto exercised by the police were transferred to Union Boards and Union Board officials during the year. Reports previously furnished by the police are now obtained from Union Boards on outbreaks of cattle diseases and of epidemic diseases within their area. Powers were given to District Magistrates to invest Presidents of Union Boards with petty magisterial powers and also to selected Vice-Presidents and members of Union Boards to exercise the power of holding inquests, which previously could only be held by Union Board Presidents.

VII.—Work of the Agricultural Department.

The condition of the cultivator during the year was generally good. The rice crop was generally excellent throughout the province and the price of jute was unprecedentedly high. Interest in agricultural matters continues to grow. In July 1922 a conference of the Agriculture,

Industries and Co-operative Departments was held, to which a number of non-official gentlemen were invited. The agenda included a series of important items, of which the principal were the organisation of co-operative and agricultural societies, the agricultural seed industry, the development of chemical industry in Bengal, the cattle-breeding policy in Bengal and the formation of Irrigation Societies. There appears to be a genuine movement in Bengal in favour of the introduction of an agricultural bias into the ordinary educational system. This is the essence of the system which is reported to be meeting with such success in the Punjab, where the Education Department is responsible for agricultural education, but the Agricultural Department trains the teachers of Agriculture. This ideal has not made much progress in Bengal yet, and there appears to be much scope for expansion in the direction of introducing agricultural education side by side with the ordinary literary education in middle and high schools.

Agricultural Research.

The basic principle of agricultural policy is, first, research and experiment, and then propaganda. The research side is concentrated at the Government Central Research Station at Dacca. It cannot be questioned that research work has been absolutely sound and very profitable. There is now about a quarter of a million of acres of jute sown with departmentally selected seed, and it has been estimated that on this account alone the Bengal cultivator is reaping an aggregate increased profit amounting to something like 50 lakhs. Improved results are also being obtained in rice; and work on similar lines with other crops, such as sugarcane, pulses, tobacco and oil-seeds is in progress with very promising prospects. Experiments are also in progress in manuring to see which yields the best results. The extent, however, to which the results of research have been applied in practice is only a fraction of what is possible, and it is hoped that with the better organisation of propaganda and of the staff available for the purpose, further progress will be achieved.

Propaganda.

Propaganda has hitherto chiefly taken the form of popularisation of improved seeds through the departmental staff. Financial stringency, it is true, necessitated a halt in the increase of staff and greater attention to the establishment of district farms. In the long run, however, this will not probably be of any disadvantage, for any increase in staff

which takes place should proceed *pari passu* with the establishment of district farms and demonstration centres. As far as these are concerned, Government ordered, in 1919, that district farms should be established at the rate of three per year. In the last three years, however, it has been possible to establish only one district farm per annum and it is satisfactory to note that the establishment of two of them per year has again been decided on, for which the improved financial condition is responsible. The value of these farms is that they act as foci for propaganda in the districts.

Agricultural Associations.

Another effective means of propaganda is through District Agricultural Associations. These, indeed, have been in existence in various districts for many years, but few of them have hitherto done constant or even intermittent good work. The greater interest taken in agricultural matters has, however, lately been reflected in the increased activity displayed by several District Agricultural Associations, among which may be mentioned those of Nadia, Birbhum, 24-Parganas, Pabna and Rangpur. The members of the Nadia District Agricultural Association have been demonstrating on a practical scale that the recommendations of the research department yield good results. In Pabna a new departure is the establishment of Agricultural Co-operative Societies with small areas of land to demonstrate improvements and to produce seed of departmentally selected crops for their members. An independent effort at the practical demonstration of improved irrigation by Rai A. C. Banerjea Bahadur deserves notice, for at his farm at Sultanpur he is demonstrating that much of the higher land which at present grows a precarious paddy crop is more capable of supporting a kharif high land crop like arahar, maize, etc.

Co-operative purchase of jute.

An interesting development is the proposal to start Co-operative Societies which will estimate the requirements of seeds a year before they are required and give their orders through the Central Bank which will finance the purchase of the seed required. The advantage of such societies will be that they will enable the Agricultural Department to make a much more accurate estimate of the amount of seeds which will be required in the following year than can be done at present, and to make arrangements accordingly. It is interesting to note that members of Agricultural Associations are showing an inclination to utilise

their respective Associations for placing their consolidated orders for jute seed. There are immense openings in other directions for co-operative endeavour. For instance, the cultivation of tobacco, which appears to be extending in Eastern Bengal, would have a great future if co-operative curing houses were established to which cultivators could take their leaf, or again much effective work might be done in the improvement of local cattle by the purchase of a bull from the Rangpur farm and placing its services at the disposal of the members of such societies.

Cattle-breeding.

Bengal is notorious for the inferior quality of its cattle. There are of course climatic difficulties, but the main difficulty is one of fodder. A very large number of cattle is imported every year into Bengal, but they rapidly deteriorate for want of proper feeding. The work of improving the breed of cattle is centred at Rangpur, where on a farm of 1,000 bighas about 300 animals are kept. Considerable progress has been made in the improvement of cattle, and the minimum standard of milk yield at the Rangpur Cattle Farm has been raised to 1,500 pounds during the year under review. The object of the experiments at this farm is to produce a dual type animal, *i.e.*, an animal useful for draught purposes as well as for milk production. It has been established at Pusa that the milking strain is pre-potent in the sire; and it is obvious that to improve the milk supply of the country it is necessary to breed a sufficient number of bulls possessing a good milking strain and to distribute them widely. This policy is already in process of application in this province, as bulls bred at Rangpur are being sent to all district farms or handed over to District Boards. Side by side with the improvement of cattle the question of the provision of fodder is also being tackled. From the point of view of fodder, Bengal is unfortunate in having rice as its principal crop, for rice straw is not as good fodder as the maize stalks of Bihar or the millets of other parts of India. Numerous crops, both indigenous and foreign, are being investigated with a view to discovering their relative utility as cattle fodder.

Agricultural Irrigation.

In the last few years there has been a great concentration of public opinion in Bengal on the value of irrigation, and the experimental and other results now available indicate that irrigation is likely, in the near

future, to become an important item in the agricultural policy of Government. In the districts of Bankura, Midnapore and Birbhum there is already a movement in favour of opening small irrigation societies on a co-operative basis. An officer of the Public Works Department has been stationed at Bankura to advise the local societies on the most suitable sites for irrigation works, and it is proposed to carry out experiments on a small scale with irrigation on all departmental farms to ascertain how far the yield of ordinary crops can thereby be increased. Irrigation will certainly be a large factor in the raising of fodder crops for improved cattle and it is also of critical importance for the paddy crop in Western Bengal in two years out of five.

Sericulture.

The object of the Sericulture Department is to help to resuscitate the silk industry in Bengal. It is only by the use of disease-free seed that sericulture can be profitable and the Department is placing such seed at the disposal of rearers. Another cause of decline of the industry is the imperfect feeling. European firms have stated that they would take Bengal silk, but that their employees will not use it on account of the time wasted in dealing with badly reeled material. Encouragement of selected rearers has resulted in the establishment of a number of these as producers of disease-free cocoons. While it will always be necessary for Government to produce a certain appreciable proportion of disease-free seed, it is hoped that eventually the whole of the balance of the seed used in the province will be produced by selected rearers under Government supervision. A further cause of trouble is the indebtedness of reelers as a class to mahajans. This difficulty it is hoped to surmount by collaboration with the Co-operative Department.

Manurial experiments with mulberry have indicated the possibility of a large increase in the supply to Government nurseries. The importance of this is obvious, as at present Rs. 20,000 per annum is spent in the purchase of outside leaf.

Further experiments indicate the possibility of considerable saving by the substitution of a cheaper antiseptic than formalin, which is at present in use in the Government nurseries. The high cost of formalin has always been against its adoption by the ordinary rearer, who will undoubtedly welcome and take up the use of a cheaper substance.

It was decided at the silk conference of March 1922, that the Department should extend its activities relating to demonstration and training of rearers. Work has been started at Bankura and Bogra on these lines and one year's result shows an increase of 200 bighas in mulberry cultivation in the Bankura district. Rearing has recently been taken up by private enterprise at Baruipur (24-Parganas) and Ranaghat (Nadia). There are two sericulture schools in Bengal—one at Rajshahi under the management of a Committee, and one at Berhampore under the Deputy Director of Sericulture. Each pupil who passes the final examination of these schools receives a reward of Rs. 250 for the construction of rearing houses according to prescribed plans. There are, at present, 52 such selected rearers on the rolls of the Department. Besides these schools, primary schools have been established at nurseries at Piastari, Amrita and Kumarpur, where, in addition to the ordinary curriculum, the elementary facts of modern sericulture are taught to the pupils.

VIII.—Working of the Co-operative Societies.

Development of credit facilities.

There was a considerable expansion of the movement during the year in consequence of the relaxation of the brake which had been applied during the preceding two years. The increase was most noticeable in the credit section of the movement which has now gained such strength that it advances by its own momentum and continues in spite of occasional mistakes and false starts to serve its purpose as a system of agricultural finance better than anything else that has yet been devised. The seasonal surpluses are becoming appreciable and thus the movement is now in a position to assist in the financing of trade and commerce in which direction a beginning was made during the year. The time has also come for assigning a more prominent part in the management of Central Banks to representatives of village societies, and with this object in view steps were taken during the year to convert several of the existing mixed-type Central Banks into pure-type institutions as also to start a few new institutions of the latter class. The question of encouraging members to deposit their savings in their societies also received attention and steps were taken to introduce the use of home-safe boxes in order to stimulate such deposits and develop banking habits among the members. With a view to assisting

further in this direction, instructions were issued during the year to allow well-managed village societies opening accounts with the Central Banks against which members would operate by means of cheques. This would not only go a long way towards removing the inelastic and piecemeal character of the present system of agricultural finance through the medium of co-operative societies, but would also familiarise rural people with the use of modern instruments of credit.

Co-operative sale of agricultural produce.

The development of other forms of co-operation continued to engage the attention of the Department and a few societies were started for the joint sale of members' agricultural produce. These societies have to surmount considerable difficulties before they can attain an assured position, and Central Banks naturally do not want to take upon themselves the financial responsibility for ventures of this kind until the struggles of small societies have indicated the more frequent causes of failure and a clear line of advance out of these difficulties. The co-operative irrigation movement made some headway and there was a considerable accession to the number of these societies, most of which are to be found in the districts of Bankura and Birbhum, where the minor irrigation works are most needed.

Co-operative organisation of silk reelers.

The co-operative organisation of silk reelers was taken up during the year and the experiment is fraught with immense possibilities for the silk industry. More societies amongst artisans engaged in cottage industries were also started, particularly amongst weavers, while industrial unions were formed with a view to solving the difficulty of financing these societies. But these central institutions have not yet been able to gain the confidence of the investing public.

Naogaon Ganja Society.

The prosperity of Naogaon Ganja Cultivators' Co-operative Society, Ltd., continued unabated in spite of the effects of the floods in Northern Bengal in the autumn of 1922, and the society maintained its fine record of good work in the direction of constructing and maintaining works of local public utility, which is of far greater importance from the co-operative point of view than the mere sale of the narcotic.

Co-operative Milk Societies.

The Co-operative Milk Societies' Union has now succeeded in obtaining an assured position and the possibilities were explored during the

year of starting milk societies in some other area where there is an increase in the yield during the rains. But the difficulty of quick transport to the city and of obtaining cold storage vans for the purpose stood in the way of development in these areas. The Union is, however, engaged in making an experiment in pasteurising milk with modern appliances, and if it be found feasible to carry out this process in the mufassal at a reasonably moderate cost, it should be possible to tap outside areas and thus assist in solving the problem of supplying pure milk to the city.

The Provincial Co-operative Bank.

The Bengal Provincial Co-operative Bank, Ltd., had a year of still greater prosperity and has been discharging the function of an apex bank in an increasing measure, but it has still a higher rôle to play, namely, the linking up of the financing of agriculture through the medium of Central Banks with the financing of trade and commerce through the medium of joint stock banks.

The reorganisation of the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society engaged attention during the year and the proposals for the formation of Divisional Boards with a view to bringing the representatives of village societies into direct touch with the activities of the society and development of village leadership were mooted during the year.

Work of the Industrial Bureau and public interest.

The Industrial Bureau attached to the Department issued to all industrial and other societies weekly bulletins of prices obtaining in the Calcutta market, and the Department's museum attached to the bureau was of greater assistance to Industrial Societies in arranging for the supply of their requirements and obtaining orders for them.

Public interest in the movement has been deepening with the growing appreciation of its increasing effects on the moral, material and economic well-being of those brought within its pale, and it is now generally recognised that it is the best system that has yet been devised for solving the problem of agricultural indebtedness in this country, while the conviction is slowly dawning that co-operative organisation is the best means of popularising improvements in the methods of cultivation and that there can be no revival of cottage industries which is not co-operative in character.

IX.—Work of the Department of Industries.

Financial difficulties.

The Department was inaugurated at a time when the industrial boom was just beginning to give place to the depression, which, along with other factors, resulted in deficit budgets for a series of years. During 1923, as in previous years, the activities of the Department had, therefore, to be limited by financial considerations. Schemes for demonstration and pioneer factories for the manufacture of cigars, glass, fruit-canning, and dairy farms have been held up for want of funds, and even schemes for the development of various industries which had received administrative approval could not be taken up. Nevertheless, a great deal was achieved by way of research, specially into processes of tanning and match manufacture, the results of which were made public, while the expert advice of the departmental officers was placed at the disposal of those interested in the development of different industries. For various reasons, the Department has not yet been able to undertake the initiation of industries directly, but it cannot be denied that its guidance and advice have been of very great assistance to many industries.

Research and propaganda.

It is in tanning and match-making that the best results have so far been obtained mainly because most of the funds available have been concentrated on them. As regards the first, experimental researches into the best method of tanning have been carried on at the Calcutta research tannery, where students and apprentices are also trained, and improved processes of chrome tanning, which have been evolved, have been popularised by means of the peripatetic staff of the Department among the local Chamars and others interested in the industry. Definite progress is visible and the improved processes have been adopted by many cottage tanners, who were previously accustomed to vegetable tannage only.

In match manufacture excellent results have been obtained. One of the difficulties in the way of the industry was the lack of suitable wood within easy reach of factories. During 1922 and 1923 a complete survey of the Bengal forests was carried out with the object of testing the suitability of various kinds of wood. Altogether some 120 samples were tested and some of them were found suitable for first class matches.

Of these, commercially the least costly, because of its easy accessibility and therefore, the most suitable, is the *gangwa* wood, which is found in abundant quantities in the Sundarbans, in the vicinity of Calcutta. The results of the enquiries made have been embodied in a report published for the benefit of industrialists. Another important problem of the industry is a method of rendering the matches damp-proof. The problem is receiving close attention and is now under investigation While a few years ago there were scarcely any match factories in Bengal, to-day many factories have come into existence, some on a large scale with imported machinery, and others, with locally manufactured machines on a small scale, and in this revival of the industry the Department can reasonably claim a large share.

Substantial improvements have been effected in the manufacture of shellac from seed lac grown in the districts of Malda, Bankura and Birbhum. Some of the existing factories have been visited and the process followed by them improved upon without adding to the cost of manufacture. A bulletin published by the Department describes the improvements effected. Similarly, in glass manufacture, for which some factories have been started in Bengal, experiments have been carried on successfully to solve a main problem of the industry, viz., the replacement of the expensive soda ash by cheap salt cake, so as to enable the industry to fight outside competition. Investigations are also in progress into methods of improving the country processes for the manufacture of gur and sugar from date and palm juice, and into coir-making from cocoanut fibres, with a view to introducing this industry on a cottage scale. The industry of vegetable oil and fat is another industry in which the Department has been able to help manufacturers by suggestions for refining oil. Improved methods of spinning and weaving have been introduced and special processes for dyeing to suit local conditions are being developed.

It is unnecessary to multiply instances of this nature and sufficient has been stated to show that not only is research in progress in various directions, but early steps are taken to spread the knowledge so gained to industrialists interested in the particular researches. In water-proofing of fabrics, for example, the Department has collected a complete bibliography on the recent methods of water-proofing and

supplied it to some of the factories. Nor is this all. Substantial practical assistance in cottage industries is always given, if possible. In button-making, for example, the services of a button expert from Bombay were obtained on loan some time ago and placed for the convenience of button manufacturers at Dacca. The result has been that many manufacturers have been enabled to improve the quality of their buttons. Among other industries which have obtained material help may be mentioned cutlery, pottery, canning, basket-making, etc.

Survey of cottage industries.

A survey of cottage and small industries which was begun in 1921 was completed during 1923. The report will be a guide to the Department as to the cottage industries to which it can usefully devote its activities.

In estimating the value of the departmental work, it should be remembered, however, that expensive technical researches are necessary for the development of new industries and such researches mean expense for which no direct return in terms of money can be furnished.

X.—Factories and Labour Conditions.

Factory Act, etc.

The year under review was the first of the full year of which Government have had experience of the working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, as amended by Act II of 1922, and, as a result of the various difficulties experienced in giving effect to all the provisions of the Act, proposals to amend the Act further is under consideration. As a result of the passing of the Indian Mines Act, IV of 1923, which repealed the Mines Act of 1901, proposals to prohibit the employment of women in mines and the desirability of introducing a system of shifts in the working of mines came under consideration. The Workmen's Compensation Act was passed during the year and the preliminary arrangements for bringing the Act into operation are under the consideration of Government.

Labour conditions.

The year 1923 was comparatively quiet so far as industrial disputes were concerned. Except for the Tramway strike, which broke out at the end of 1922 and continued till January of the year under review, practically all the strikes occurring during the year were short-lived. About 30 per cent. of the strikes concerned jute mills and the rest were

distributed over several other industries. In 19 cases the cause of dispute was the rate of pay, in one case the demand for bonus, in 14 cases it concerned discharge or dismissal and other disciplinary action taken by the employers, in 6 cases leave and hours of work and in 21 cases, miscellaneous reasons. About 16 per cent. of the strikes were completely successful in the sense that the concessions demanded were granted in full, about 3 per cent. were only partially successful, while all the rest ended in the unconditional surrender of the strikers.

It has been pointed out elsewhere that the strike fever was highest when political agitation was at its greatest in 1921, and that the working classes were in many instances being definitely exploited for political purposes. The abatement of strikes may be ascribed, firstly, to the decadence of political agitation, secondly, the equilibrium which has been reached between the cost of living and wages, and thirdly, to the lesson which is being slowly learnt that strikes based on political issues cannot in the long run improve the lot of the workers. Indeed one of the most striking features of the year's industrial disputes is the formulation of the lists of industrial grievances which are usually connected with wages or conditions of work and the relative absence of purely political issues.

The labour associations in the province, of which there is a considerable number, are reported to have made fair progress. There were numerous conferences during the year, of which mention may be made of the Kankinara Labour Conference in March and the Railwaymen's Conference at Santahar in April, the Provincial Postal and R. M. S. Conference at Comilla in June and the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Conference in Calcutta at the end of October. Of these conferences a noticeable feature of the agenda was the exclusion of political resolutions and a general attempt to adhere to purely labour objects. A healthy sign is that a few of the labour associations are reported to have devoted themselves to perfecting their organisations. Towards the end of the year several of the local labour leaders were busy making arrangements for holding the All-India Trade Union Congress in Calcutta in pursuance of a resolution passed at the Conference held in Lahore in March 1922.

XI.—Public Health.

Sanitary measures.

Considerable progress was made in the application of measures of disease prevention during 1923, especially in the direction of anti-cholera, anti-malaria and anti-kala-azar work. With the exception of Darjeeling, every District Board now possesses a fully qualified health officer under whose guidance a large amount of useful work has been initiated. For example, more than a hundred local dispensary doctors have been trained in the diagnosis of kala-azar and more than 150 centres for the treatment of this disease have been established throughout the province. Apart from this, a vast amount of medical relief is now being given to sufferers from kala-azar by the agency of voluntary associations of medical workers, connected with such organisations as the Central Co-operative Anti-Malarial Society, the Bengal Health Association and other philanthropic institutions. The increasing attention devoted to public health work by voluntary agencies is of the happiest augury for the future. The latest reports show that there are 92 co-operative anti-malarial societies in existence and, under the active stimulus of Rai Dr. Gopal Chandra Chatterjea Bahadur, the initiator of this movement, these societies are undertaking work both against kala-azar and cholera in addition to their primary function of malaria prevention. The members of these societies are also undertaking propaganda work of a most useful character. The methods adopted for propaganda are interesting. The Ghola Society, for example, have produced a play entitled "Malaria--the Enemy of Bengal." With this and with a small concert party they have made frequent tours to neighbouring and even distant villages and have succeeded in inducing a number of communities to follow their example and establish mutual aid societies for the prevention of malaria.

Cholera.

The result of this organisation of health work in the mufassal and the growing appreciation of the fact that cholera is preventable is reflected in the cholera mortality, which showed a further reduction in 1923 over the low mortality of 1922. The deaths from cholera fell by 20 per cent. or well below 40,000, a proud record for Bengal, which has enjoyed for long the unenviable notoriety of being called "the home of Asiatic cholera." Every division and nearly every district shared in the improvement, though severe outbreaks were recorded in Jessore,

Rajshahi, Pabna, Dacca, Bakarganj and Tippera in March and April, and in Mymensingh, towards the close of the year. The Gangasagar *mela* passed off uneventfully, with only three deaths from cholera, and the continued success of the anti-cholera work of the 24-Parganas District Board in connection with this *mela* is probably an important factor in the general reduction of cholera throughout the province. Pilgrims from Gangasagar formerly diffused cholera infection widely, but since 1919 this source of infection has been controlled with admirable results.

Small-pox.

Mortality from small-pox similarly fell by 5,000 in 1923, a better result than has been seen for 18 years. Small-pox tends to recur, however, every five or six years, and a temporary increase of mortality may be anticipated in the near future.

Plague.

There was 97 deaths from plague in 1923, as compared with 150 in the year immediately preceding, including 20 of supposed pneumonic plague reported from the Dacca district. It is by no means certain, however, that the Dacca deaths were really due to plague. Apart from this outbreak all but one of the remaining plague deaths were in Calcutta.

Fevers.

There was a slight increase of fever mortality in 1923, as compared with 1922. But the increase was not general throughout the province, and most of it is accounted for by greater mortality in the Rajshahi Division. Throughout the year Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna districts exhibited enhanced fever mortality, and during the last quarter every district, except Darjeeling, reported a greatly increased number of fever deaths. In the Burdwan and Presidency Divisions fever mortality was much lower than in 1922, except towards the end of the year, when there was an increase. The Dacca Division showed increased fever mortality during the year, and the Chittagong Division, which reported an increase during the first quarter, showed a considerable improvement during the last nine months of the year.

Births and deaths.

As might be expected from the foregoing review, there was a considerable improvement in the birth-rate, an increase shared by every division, but specially marked in the Rajshahi Division, where the births increased by 12 per cent. over those recorded in 1922. Mortality was, it is true, a little in excess of that recorded in 1922, but this was only

to be expected, as the death-rate of the latter year was lower than it had been for over 20 years. The increase of deaths was due to heavier mortality in the Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong Divisions. In both the Burdwan and Presidency Divisions the death-rate was lower than in the previous year.

Drainage and sewerage schemes.

During the year considerable progress was made in the Dacca sewerage scheme and the water-supply projects at Krishnagar and Midnapore. The Kurseong sewerage scheme has been completed, but has not yet been taken over by the municipality owing to certain reported defects. The attempt to secure a water-supply at Patuakhali by means of deep boring, failed, the water obtained being saline. The Committee appointed to advise in regard to the disposal of the drainage and storm water of Calcutta submitted their report during the year and advised that measures should be taken to maintain the channel of the Bidyadhari river as the outfall for the Calcutta drainage. The passing of an amended Calcutta Municipal Act during the year is expected to effect a vast improvement in the sanitation of Cossipore-Chitpur, Maniktala and Garden Reach Municipalities, which, in future, are to be included within the boundaries of Calcutta.

XII.—Education.

The Universities.

The Dacca University completed the second year of its existence, a year marked by appreciable progress in every direction. The number of students increased, and it is believed that students in Bengal are beginning to realise the real value of the new methods of intellectual training which are in vogue there, as well as the many other solid advantages which this new Eastern Bengal University has to offer. With its residential system, its personal tutorial control, its unrivalled facilities for athletics, and its organisation of social life, Dacca has all the makings of a real University in the best sense of the word. That it has ceased to be regarded as an intruder into a domain so long the sole preserve of the Calcutta University, and that its 9 lakhs annual grant does not rouse heartburning among the devotees of the *Alma Mater*, it would be too much to claim. But it would be well to remember that if all the grants made annually or spent directly on Calcutta University and its colleges are totalled, they form a very respectable

total not far short of three times the present grant of Rs. 9 lakhs to the University of Dacca, all of which latter is by no means a permanently recurring grant, part of it being a capital grant spread over a number of years. With continuity of development Dacca will become one of India's outstanding educational centres. But it must be given time to take real root and win prestige. In the meantime its creation gives rise to certain problems of co-ordination between the two Universities and during the year the idea of a Co-ordination Committee, which has since materialised, was mooted.

Turning to the older of the two Universities of Bengal, the University of Calcutta, there is little actual change or development to record. The year was one of much hard thought on the subject of the reform of the University. The Calcutta University Commission made it abundantly clear that reform is essential, and that the system, both in matters of organisation and on its education side, needs radical overhauling. It is, however, one thing to recognise the necessity of reform; another to know exactly what to do. The difficulty is rendered far worse than it might be, because it is not a mere domestic question for Bengal. Assam has its views, and as Assam sends its students to the examinations of Calcutta University, they cannot be ignored. Then, again, the Government of India have a statutory voice in the matter, which cannot be ignored, if legislation is to take place. All parties agree on one thing, that reform is necessary, but they agree on very little else. His Excellency the Governor convened a conference of representatives of the Government of India, the Government of Bengal, the Government of Assam and the University of Calcutta, in the hope that an agreed basis for legislation might be arrived at. That hope has hitherto not been realised. Very fundamental differences of opinion are known to exist, and the Conference has brought them into clear relief. At the same time the mere fact that all the parties involved met, and faced fundamental issues in verbal discussion, is a valuable asset for the future, and it is to be hoped that a spirit of compromise will smooth the yet formidable difficulties in the way of real reform.

A special non-recurring grant of Rs. 5½ lakhs was paid to Calcutta University during the calendar year 1923, in order to meet partially

the University's deficit. The University finances cannot yet unfortunately be regarded as established on a sound basis. The offer of a grant on conditions was an attempt in the direction of assisting the University to put its financial house in order. The attitude of a University towards conditions must obviously depend on the nature of the conditions. While there is room for controversy as to the nature of the conditions which should be imposed, Government is obviously on sound ground in asking that, as the party expected to foot the bill, when a deficit occurs, it should have some real control over the University's financial administration. The problem in fact is that of reconciling financial control with the absence of any unessential limitation upon the freedom of the University, a problem by no means found only in India. The grant referred to above was paid without a really satisfactory solution of the problem, and Government is still in the unsatisfactory position of being the annual legatee of an uncertain amount of deficit.

Secondary education.

The most insistent University problem, however, is that concerned with the secondary schools. It is a part of University reform, because the University, and not the Department of Public Instruction, is the recognising authority for high schools. Schools cannot present students for the Matriculation unless the University "recognise" the school as competent to teach up to that standard. The University Syndicate is a body somewhat imperfectly suited, owing to its many and multifarious duties, to perform this duty with the care and attention which it deserves. All parties really recognise this, but here, again, there is disagreement on fundamentals. The University would like to continue the task, but with improved machinery and adequate finances. The Department of Public Instruction could adequately perform the task, if given an access of strength for the purpose, but popular sentiment probably regards this solution of the problem with disfavour. There remains the solution adopted by the Commission, a Secondary Board. It had been hoped to introduce a Secondary Education Bill in the Legislative Council in 1923, but this proved impossible. The Government have had conferences with the University authorities on the subject and are now engaged in redrafting their Bill. The essential factors of the situation are these. The schools are a source of great gain to the University, which partly

finances the post-graduate scheme from these profits; in the second place, not only must the University be compensated for its loss of this source of profit, but considerable funds must be placed at the disposal of the new controlling agency. Thus the matter largely hinges on the provision of additional funds, though there are other and equally thorny obstacles in the way of a solution. Stress is laid, on the one hand, on the absolute right of the University to control the examinations that admit students to its portals; while, on the other hand, many emphasise the principle that profits made from schools should be spent on schools, and not on collegiate or post-graduate education.

Primary education.

The most important feature in connection with primary education was the introduction of the revised curriculum, with effect from January 1923, in all except a few of the districts of the Presidency. The old curriculum was retained in these few districts to enable the merits of the two curricula to be compared, with a view to seeing what adjustments are necessary.

There was some small expansion of primary education through the adoption of Mr. Biss's scheme by a few municipalities and local bodies. Progress was, however, not rapid, financial difficulties standing in the way. The issue at the moment in primary education is clear. Who shall pay for primary education, the local Government or the local bodies? At present Government offers half for an approved scheme to the local body's half. But the local body is expected to come forward with an offer. The alternatives are plain. Either the local Government must devise a central system financed and largely controlled by itself, or it must by legislation compel the local bodies to perform their duty by raising funds by local taxation. So long as financial or political difficulties prevent either of these two courses, Bengal will remain on its present low plane of literacy. One thing at least is obvious, viz., that in the absence of money, Bengal can do no more than tinker with the problem.

Retrenchment.

The iconoclastic nature of the Retrenchment Committee's recommendations on the subject of education forced the educational authorities to defend basic principles as well as to scrutinise their various activities in detail. All guru-training schools, all normal training schools and two secondary training colleges were to go. This recommendation was

successfully resisted, as it deserved to be, though it resulted in the wise decision to replace many of the old type of guru-training schools by a small number of new schools of the improved type. General deprovincialisation of Government colleges and schools was recommended and raised a storm of controversy. The basis of the recommendation was the sound criticism that in the midst of nine hundred secondary schools and a large number of affiliated colleges, all needing grants, it was questionable how far it was right for Government to maintain very expensively, and not always in the places most needing them, a few privileged institutions, whose staffs were viewed by others less fortunate with envy. It was urged that the money spent on direct management of these institutions would maintain many more on an aided basis. There is considerable force in this contention, though it cannot be denied that Government-maintained schools and colleges are valued wherever they exist, and their transference to the control of a private body would meet with considerable opposition. The Education Ministry for this reason felt compelled to resist immediate general deprovincialisation, though this policy was accepted as an ultimate goal to be aimed at and gradually prepared for. The recommendations of the Committee on this subject, however, were not entirely infructuous, since it was considered that the problem which arose out of the Committee's suggestions regarding the Presidency and the Sanskrit Colleges could not be disposed of without careful examination, and Government, therefore, appointed committees to advise them as to the future of these institutions, while several economies were made in anticipation of the recommendations of the committees. Fees were raised in several Government institutions during the year.

XIII.—The Legislative Council.

The functions of a legislative body, as Lord Ronaldshay once pointed out, may roughly be divided under three main heads—the first is *constructive*, viz., the making of laws and the provision of funds for carrying on the administration; the second is *inquisitorial*, viz., the eliciting of information as to the acts and intentions of the administration with a view to enlightening the public; and the third is *critical*, viz., the criticism of both the policy and the acts of Government.

Legislative work in 1921.

During the first year of its existence the attention of the Council was directed almost exclusively to the last two functions. A powerful volume of criticism was brought to bear upon the whole field of administration chiefly by means of the discussion of resolutions on matters of general interest. During the sessions of 1921 no less than 364 such resolutions were balloted for and 135 actually discussed. What this meant would be clear from a comparison of these figures with those of the House of Commons. In 1918, when the House of Commons sat for 136 days, the number of resolutions on matters of general public interest, including motions for the adjournment of the House, moved by private members, was 34. In 1919, when the Commons sat for 163 days, the number of similar resolutions was 41.

As regards the second function, the searching nature of the inquisition exercised by the Council may be gathered from the fact that more than 1,293 questions were asked and replied to. The Legislative achievement of the Council was small, but there was very great activity in respect of the reduction of grants presented to the Council mainly on the reserved side. There was, perhaps, a lack of appreciation of the exact constitutional position as between the reserved and transferred departments and a general disposition to treat the reserved side of Government as if it was entirely responsible to the Council.

1922.

The second year of the Council's work, however, yielded a fair crop of legislative enactments, of which the three most notable were fiscal measures, designed to save the finances of the province from collapse. They brought a great deal of obloquy on the Council, but if the verdict of history may be anticipated, it will be set down to its credit that it had the courage to face unpopularity in the assertion of the principle that a legislative body has responsible constructive functions as well as its inquisitorial and critical functions. One important piece of social legislation deserves notice, viz., the Bengal Children Act, 1922, which provided for the custody, trial and punishment of youthful offenders and for the protection of children and young persons. Provision was made for the establishment of reformatory and industrial schools and auxiliary homes and for the inspection of institutions for poor children as well as for the trial of youthful offenders in Juvenile Courts. Speaking generally, it substituted educational treatment for penal measures in the case of children and young persons convicted of an offence.

1923. Legislative work.

The last year of the Council's work, viz., that with which this record mainly deals, was the most fruitful in legislative achievements.

Among the Acts passed the more important were—(1) the Bengal Aerial Ropeways Act, (2) the Calcutta Port Amendment Act, (3) the Calcutta Rent Amendment Act, (4) the Goondas Act, (5) the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act, (6) the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act and (7) the Calcutta Municipal Act. The first will, it is hoped, eventually lead to a useful development in communications. The second has conferred additional powers in the matter of finance on the Port Commissioners and enables them to make better provision for their employees by means of a provident fund, combined with a system of bonuses. The third continued the operation of the Rent Act, 1920, for another year. The fourth provided a summary procedure for the removal of the criminal elements from the population of Calcutta. The fifth gave the tenants the power of avoiding a system of land tenure, which can be made a means of oppression, and at the same time gave to landlords an opportunity of avoiding a system of land settlement and rent assessment which, in the main, causes them much inconvenience.

The Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, was the most signal achievement of the Council. It emerged from the Council in a form very different from that in which it was introduced. Large areas were added to Calcutta, the number of municipal commissioners, now to be called councillors, was raised from 80 to 90, the number of nominated commissioners was raised from 8 to 10 to meet the vast and often divergent interests of minorities, of backward classes and of labour. Women were given the municipal franchise, district councils were given statutory recognition, and far-reaching alterations were made in the administrative provisions in the direction of relaxing the fetters of Government control. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act is a piece of non-official legislation of which the chief author is Mr. S. C. Mukherjea. The main object of the Act is the suppression of commercialised vice and to that end it confers large powers on the police for the purpose of checking immorality and provides for the removal and disposal of minor girls found in brothels. The attitude of Government throughout was one of active sympathy and co-operation.

Questions and Resolutions.

The experience of the working of the Council in the first two years of its existence brought home to members the necessity of restricting the right of putting questions and moving resolutions. The lengths to

which this right was carried will appear from the fact that one member, in one session, was responsible for no less than 333 questions and 50 resolutions. A Select Committee was appointed and, on the basis of their report, the standing orders were amended. Nevertheless, the number of questions put and answered during the year was 946. Three hundred and seventy-three resolutions were admitted and balloted for, of which 50 were discussed, and of these 30 were withdrawn, 13 lost and 7 carried. The number of questions and resolutions testify to an inquisitorial interest spreading over the whole field of administration. Among the resolutions moved, one of the most interesting was that recommending a grant of Rs. 2½ lakhs to the Calcutta University in the January session. It excited lively interest and resulted in a two days' debate, after which it was withdrawn. In the July session a motion for adjournment of the House was moved to enable the Council to discuss the serious allegations of police oppression on the people of Charmanair. The local officials came in for much criticism, but the Government position, as explained by the Hon'ble Member, was that as thorough an enquiry as was possible in the circumstances, had been made by the responsible head of the district and after that the only possible action was either to establish the allegations in court or to accept the finding of the District Officer. The motion was talked out. At the fag-end of the session a resolution was moved recommending that all persons undergoing sentences of imprisonment in Bengal for offences of a political character should be released. A similar motion was debated and lost in the previous year and this, too, suffered the same fate.

Prorogation and dissolution.

The Council was prorogued on the 31st August pending its dissolution. In proroguing it His Excellency the Governor pointed out that the real meaning of responsible government had not been yet fully appreciated either by the electorate or by the members of the Council. "The extent," he said, "to which it is in the power of the electorate to secure a Government of its own making under the existing constitution does not appear to me to be fully realised as yet. There is no very marked difference of attitude towards that portion of the executive which is responsible and that which is still irresponsible. Both are indiscriminately classified as the bureaucracy and regarded as a fair target for invective." "I feel," he went on, "that the experience which has

been gained in the last two years and a half has been of the utmost value as a training in the exercise of responsibility, but that the progress made in utilising the machinery of the constitution has been small."

Financial control of the Council.

The extent to which the Council exercised their financial powers under the Act does not appear to have been fully realised. Under the Act the Council have the power to refuse a demand for a grant relating to a reserved subject as well as a demand relating to a transferred subject, but the Governor has the power under section 72D (*2*) (*a*) to restore a grant for a reserved subject if the demand is essential for the discharge of his responsibility. The number of motions for reduction of demands of grants which were tabled during the lifetime of the Council, viz., 2,118, shows how freely they exercised this power. The majority of these motions were in respect of the reserved departments. The power of restoration of grants for a reserved subject was intended to be regarded as a real and not an unusual or arbitrary power. Nevertheless, in consequence of the adverse vote of the Council various projects on the reserved side, regarded by the Government as of primary importance, have been abandoned or postponed. The partition of the Mymensingh and Midnapore districts may be quoted as instances, as also the postponement of work on the Grand Trunk Canal project. The power of certification has been sparingly exercised and generally for winding up schemes the execution of which has been stopped by an adverse vote. On the other hand, as explained in the section relating to Finance, the local Government curtailed their expenditure in deference to the wishes of the Council to the extent of Rs. 89 lakhs in 1921-22 and Rs. 48 lakhs in the following year. Further substantial reductions are being made as a result of the report of the Retrenchment Committee.

The Legislative Council and Ministerial responsibility.

One important function of a legislature, perhaps the most important one, was not mentioned by Lord Ronaldshay and is not at all understood as yet by the members of the Bengal Legislative Council—namely, the power to determine the character of the executive and to control the general lines of its policy. It is generally assumed in India that the main function of the House of Commons is to criticise the Government and the members of the Legislative Council are chiefly occupied with the exercise of this function, but it is forgotten that it is the minority in the House of Commons that having failed to secure the Government of its choice, is chiefly occupied in criticism. The main purpose

of the majority is to support the Government, even when some of its measures are unpopular.

Before 1919 the Legislatures in India had no power to determine the composition of any part of the Executive and criticism was therefore all that was left to it. Having been trained for so many years on these lines it is not surprising that members of the Legislative Council should find it difficult to change their critical habits and to realise the fundamental changes in the constitution which was effected in 1919. It is now in the power of the majority of the Legislative Council, if the members composing it can combine into a solid party, to secure that the Ministers in charge of transferred subjects shall be selected from their numbers and through such Ministers to influence even the administration of reserved subjects.

In the first reformed Council this power was not at first realised at all and was only dimly appreciated by a few members in the later years. The advent of a strong compact party with an acknowledged leader in the new Council might have effected great progress in this direction, but for the fact that this party have voluntarily abdicated the most important power which the constitution has placed in their hands. This refusal to accept the responsibility of office after winning an election is a striking illustration of the inability of men trained in a school of irresponsible criticism to realise at once the extent to which their own demands have been granted or to use the power which the votes of the electorate have secured for them. The conception of an irresponsible and irremoveable Executive and a critical legislature is too ingrained to be eradicated all at once and consequently the opportunities of gaining experience in the exercise of responsibility have been largely wasted. The neglect of such opportunities may not surprise those who realise that considerable time must elapse before habits of thought and action can be changed, but the authors of it are those who are loudest in their protestations that no probation is required or that 10 years is an unnecessarily long probationary period in the exercise of partial responsibility.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

For—Physical Features of the country area, climate and chief staples.
Historical summary.
Form of Administration.
Character of Land Tenures : System of Surveys and Settlement.
Civil Divisions of British Territory.
Details of the last census.

See—General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 1–141.

Changes in the Administration.

Executive Council.

The Hon'ble Sir John Kerr, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S., resigned his office as a member of the Bengal Executive Council on the afternoon of the 7th October 1922 and was succeeded by the Hon'ble Mr. James Donald, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Legislative Council.

2. Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, C.I.E., was appointed President of the Bengal Legislative Council from 1st July 1922.

The Bengal Legislative Council was dissolved from September 24th, 1923.

Relations with the Tributary States and Frontier affairs.

(*a*) COOCH BEHAR.

[Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State for the year 1922-23.]

(*Area—1,307 square miles ; population—592,489 ; chief products—rice, jute, and tobacco ; military force—302 and 4 guns.*)

General.

3. His Highness Maharaja Sir Jitendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, K.C.S.I., died in England on the 20th December 1922 and was succeeded by his eldest son, His Highness Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, who is a minor. Pending the foundation of a Council of Regency the State Council was recognised to be the supreme administrative authority. During the year the sanction of the Secretary of State was received to the proposal that the Governor of Bengal should act as agent to the Governor-General for the Cooch Behar State, instead of the local Government or the Governor in Council as hitherto.

Finance and Revenue.

4. The total revenue of the State amounted during the year to Rs. 37,95,680, against Rs. 32,61,110 of the previous year. This sum includes a loan of Rs. 1,55,000, taken by the State from local sources for strengthening the cash balance. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 36,20,803, against Rs. 31,93,566 of the previous year. A sum of Rs. 93,377 was, however, expended in the payment of the loan referred to above. The real revenue may, therefore, be taken to be Rs. 36,40,680, and the real expenditure Rs. 35,27,426, leaving a surplus of 1,13,254.

Crops and condition of the people.

5. The area of land under jute showed a very considerable increase and the outturn of the crop was estimated at 75 per cent. Jute prices ranged between Rs. 5-8-0 and Rs. 14 per maund. Common rice sold at Rs. 4-8-0 to Rs. 6 per maund, and good prices were obtained for tobacco and mustard. Improved economic condition was reflected in a decrease of crime. For this, another contributory cause was the collapse of the non-co-operation movement which, in the previous year, caused considerable anxiety and trouble to the authorities of the State.

The statistics show a serious increase in malaria.

Education.

6. The number of pupils attending the four higher English schools rose from 804 to 873. The number of recognised primary schools rose from 272 to 278. The Victoria College continued to make satisfactory progress. The total expenditure from State grants and local sources on primary and secondary education was Rs. 77,744.

(b) TRIPURA STATE.

[Annual Administration Report of the Tripura State for the year 1922-23.]

(Area—4,116 square miles; population—3,04,437; chief products—rice and cotton; military force—226 all ranks; present Maharaja—Manikya Birendra Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, Maharaja of Tripura; family—Indo-Chinese; caste—Kshatriya; has male heir; residence—Agartala.)

Visit of His Highness the Maharaja to Calcutta.

7. His Highness the Maharaja had private interviews with their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Governor of Bengal in Calcutta during his visit between the 23rd November and the 29th December 1922.

Revenue and Finance.

8. The total revenue of the State amounted to Rs. 13,33,357 against Rs. 13,78,280 in the previous year, the average of the preceding quinquennium being Rs. 12,51,212. The gross receipts of the State and attached zamindaries amounted to Rs. 26,72,728 and the total amount available for expenditure, including the opening balance, was Rs. 38,70,176.

Crops and the condition of the people.

9. The average rainfall for the year was :04 above the quinquennial average of 87 : 79 inches. Satisfactory crops of paddy, mustard, jute and sugar-cane were harvested. Cholera appeared locally but the death-rate was very small.

Education.

10. The number of children attending schools in the State decreased by six to 5,570. The Woodburn Artisan School had 18 boys as against 28 in the previous year.

Condition of the people.

[Report on Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

11. It is always a matter of considerable difficulty to estimate the material condition of the people in a particular year. It seldom happens that a portion of the province is not visited by some natural calamity and that improvement in one direction is not counterbalanced by a retrogression in another. Although on the whole the cultivators

had a good year and were able to sell their produce at prices which ranged high almost throughout the year, parts of the province were visited by floods which caused considerable damage and seriously retarded the progress of the areas affected. Again, while on the whole wages ruled fairly high as a result of the steady demand for labour both skilled and unskilled, a dull market, high freights and delays in railway transport caused a depression in one of the biggest industries of the province, viz., coal. Nevertheless if a balance has to be struck the indications are that there was some improvement in the material condition of the people. There was a slight fall in the price of imported cloth and with the good prices and high wages ruling during the year the cultivating and the labouring classes were better off than a large section of the landless middle classes who depend upon a fixed income.

The two outstanding events of the year under report were the cyclone in the Cox's Bazar subdivision of the district of Chittagong and the heavy floods in the Rajshahi Division. The former did considerable damage to the houses of the people, necessitating the advance of a fairly large sum of money by way of agricultural loans, the latter caused great loss of crops, cattle and houses in Rajshahi and Bogra and to a smaller extent in Dinajpur and Pabna. Government relief measures in the Rajshahi district, which included the distribution of rabi crop seed to the value of Rs. 15,297, gratuitous relief of Rs. 7,620, loans to the extent of Rs. 3,72,260, and charitable relief for the rebuilding of huts to the extent of Rs. 50,397, were supplemented by non-official agencies which took an active part in the work of relief and reconstruction from funds contributed privately. Similar measures were taken in the other affected districts and the happy fruits of the combined effort are visible in the wonderful recovery made by the areas affected. As regards the rest of the province, the unfavourable weather conditions at the beginning of the year were compensated by heavy rainfall in June and the succeeding months. This was beneficial to the highland crops but caused considerable damage to lowland crops and necessitated the granting of relief in the Madaripur subdivision of the Faridpur district and portions of several districts in the Burdwan Division. The weather conditions restricted the area of jute cultivation but ensured good prices for the crop.

On the industrial side while coal was depressed for reasons already stated, the jute mills in Hooghly, Howrah and the 24-Parganas had a prosperous year. The prices of tea soared to unusual heights and enabled good wages to be paid to garden coolies among whom the unrest, so noticeable a feature of recent years, died down. Of the home industries, the weaving industry failed to maintain the artificial stimulus given to it by the non-co-operation movement except in Bankura and some districts of Eastern Bengal where co-operative methods had been introduced before.

CHAPTER II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

Realisation of the Revenue.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

Total collections.

12. The total number of estates paying land revenue was 99,090 against 98,847 in the previous year. Of these 92,754 were permanently settled estates, 3,847 temporarily-settled estates and 2,489 estates under direct management of Government. The current demand of the year amounted to Rs. 2,91,74,185. Of the increase of Rs. 7,12,695 in demand over the previous year Rs. 5,76,475 was due mainly to a change in the latest dates of payment of arrear demand both in respect of temporarily-settled tea estates and jotes in the Western Duars, only a portion of the demand of these estates becoming payable in 1921-22, while their full demand was accounted for during the year under report. The remaining increase was due, as usual, mostly to new settlements and resettlements and progressive increase of demand in temporarily-settled and Government estates. The total realisable demand, including arrears amounting to Rs. 18,30,960, was Rs. 3,10,05,145, out of which Rs. 2,91,59,054 or 94·04 per cent. of the total was collected. The collection constituted 99·9 per cent. of the current demand against 94·05 and 99·4 per cent. respectively in the previous year. A sum of Rs. 2,15,519, though collected within the year, could not be credited in the accounts of the year. The total remissions amounted to Rs. 95,080 against Rs. 1,08,431 in the preceding year.

Miscellaneous land revenue.

13. The total collections amounted to Rs. 5,44,694 against Rs. 5,30,823 in the preceding year. The increase was due mainly to the increase in the receipts under the following heads:—

(1) "Sale of Government lands,"
(2) "Value of revenue abated," and
(3) "Other receipts," including *salami* levied in Government estates.

Changes in the land revenue demand of temporarily-settled estates and estates under direct management.

14. There was a net increase of 23,829 acres in the area of land settled and of Rs. 1,92,402 in revenue.

Redemption of land revenue.

15. The total number of petty estates and holdings, the land revenue of which was redeemed during the year, was 463 against 534 in the preceding year. These were mostly permanently-settled holdings in Calcutta and its suburbs. The total amount of land revenue redeemed was Rs. 566 and the price realised aggregated Rs. 16,919. The total revenue redeemed up to date now exceeds Rs. 34,000, for which Rs. 8,37,286 has been realised as redemption money.

16. The number of defaults and of sales during the year was 13,283 and 1,238 respectively against 14,369 and 1,098 in the preceding year. In 35 cases sales were annulled by the Commissioners under section 27, Bengal Act VII of 1868, and in 31 cases by the Board under section 26 of Act XI of 1859, as amended by the Decentralization Act, 1914. The price realised by sale was 3·7 times the Government revenue. Coercive measures— (a) Sale Law.

17. The total number of certificates (exclusive of those for cesses) filed during the year rose from 68,448 in 1921-22 to 77,279. The percentage of certificate cases disposed of to the total number for disposal was 76·9 against 73·7 in the previous year, the number of cesses pending at the close of the year being 22,840 against 22,027 at the end of 1921-22. In the majority of cases payment was made on the issue of notices or on attachment of property, and actual sale was necessary in only 4,134 cases or 5·4 per cent. of the total number of cases (76,464) disposed of during the year. (b) Certificates.

18. The total number of processes served during the year was 981,177 against 961,165 in the preceding year. The process-fees realised amounted to Rs. 3,94,652 against Rs. 3,69,509 in the preceding year, and the total cost of service, including the pay of supervising establishment debitable to land revenue, was Rs. 4,26,649 against Rs. 3,88,097. The cost of process-serving establishment exceeded the receipts from fees in all the districts except Burdwan, Midnapore, Howrah, the 24-Parganas, Dacca, Tippera and Noakhali. The increased cost was due to the increase in the rates of pay of the process-servers and of the supervising staff. The system of service of processes by dafadars through presidents of Union Boards was in force in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Hooghly, Howrah, Khulna, Jessore, Dacca, Tippera, Rangpur, and in parts of the districts of Burdwan, the 24-Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, Faridpur and Noakhali. The system is reported to have worked well on the whole in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Dacca and in the Lalbagh and Feni subdivisions of the districts of Murshidabad and Noakhali respectively. In Hooghly it showed improvement during the year. It did not work well in Howrah, the 24-Parganas, Jessore, Khulna, Tippera and Rangpur, where delays and defective service are still very common. Processes.

Other Revenue Work.

19. The total number of proprietary interests entered in the land registration registers of the Presidency was 998,549 at the beginning of the year as against 1,003,470 at its close. For want of funds the work of re-writing land registration registers on the basis of record-of-rights could not be taken up in any district during the year. Land Registration.

20. There were 256 cases pending at the close of the preceding year and 45 cases were instituted during the year under report. Out of the Partitions.

total of 301 cases 58 cases were disposed of. Special officers were employed during the year exclusively on partition work in Mymensingh, Faridpur, Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Rangpur, while in Tippera the services of a whole-time officer were required up to the 2nd January 1923 only. The incidence of cost per acre of the area partitioned during the year was 11 annas 7 pies in Dacca and 3 annas 11 pies in Mymensingh.

Land Acquisition.

21. During the year proceedings for the acquisition, on behalf of Government, local bodies and companies, of land covering an area of 2,686·59,032 acres were confirmed at a total cost of Rs. 58,58,392-3-2, as against an area of 2,145·6 acres at a cost of Rs. 1,00,34,582 in the preceding year. Of the total expenditure incurred a sum of Rs. 13,44.031-15-1 was paid for the acquisition of land required for Government, including State Railways and Companies' Railways provided with land free of cost under the terms of their agreements, and Rs. 45,14,360-4-1 for all other purposes, viz., for District Boards, Municipalities, Calcutta Improvement Trust, Calcutta Port Commissioners, and Railway and other companies. The average cost per acre of land for which acquisition proceedings were confirmed during the year was Rs. 2,180-9-8, as against Rs. 4,676-13-0 in the preceding year. The decrease in the average cost is chiefly due to the fact that proceedings for the acquisition of a large area of less valuable land in the suburbs of Calcutta in the district of the 24-Parganas were confirmed during the year.

Loans— (a) Land Improvement Loans Act.

22. The value of loans outstanding at the beginning of the year was Rs. 1,25,809, and loans amounting to Rs. 29,950 were advanced during the year, of which Rs. 20,000 was advanced to the tenants of the colonization area and the khas mahal tenants in Bakarganj. The total outstanding principal was Rs. 1,55,759, of which Rs. 24,974 was repayable during the year. Of this Rs. 317 was held under suspension, but Rs. 34,222 was realised, including Rs. 11,840 collected in advance, while Rs. 332 was remitted. The balance outstanding at the close of the year was Rs. 1,21,207, of which Rs. 2,260 was overdue. An amount of Rs. 5,323 was due on account of interest, current and arrear, the collection during the year amounted to Rs. 8,508, including Rs. 3,500 collected in advance, while Rs. 34 was remitted and a balance of Rs. 281 was left unrealised at the close of the year.

(b) Agriculturists' Loans Act.

23. The amount advanced during the year under the Agriculturists' Loans Act was Rs. 8,52,644. The largest sums were issued in the districts of Rajshahi (Rs. 3,87,554) and Bogra (Rs. 3,00,000) where the heavy floods in the latter part of September 1922 necessitated liberal grants. The outstanding balance from the previous year was Rs. 7,70,025, making the aggregate amount outstanding Rs. 16,22,669, of which Rs. 7,77,333 was recoverable during the year. The total collections amounted to Rs. 4,25,794. Rupees 1,583 was remitted. The balance still outstanding amounts to Rs. 11,95,297 (including Rs. 40,876 held under suspension), of which Rs. 3,13,560 was overdue. The floods which

occurred in Bankura and in the Rajshahi Division are responsible for these heavy arrears, as they affected the recoveries in Bankura, Rajshahi, Pabna and Bogra. Rupees 91,135 was due on account of interest, current and arrear, Rs. 51,488 was collected, including Rs. 6 realised in advance, Rs. 340 was remitted and Rs. 2,714 suspended, leaving a balance of Rs. 37,047.

Surveys.

[Report of the Survey Department, Bengal, for the year ending the 30th September 1922.]

Outturn of the year.

24. During the year under review the decision to reduce the survey programme from a four-party to a two-party programme was carried into effect. Traverse survey was finished in the districts of Bogra and Pabna by one party and continued in Khulna by the second party. The main programme carried out consisted of 1,864 square miles against an estimate of 1,801 square miles. It was fully completed and no revision work remained. The Survey Department also carried out some miscellaneous surveys during the year.

Land Records and Settlement.

[Annual Report of the Director of Land Records for the year ending the 30th September 1922.]

General.

25. Cadastral survey and settlement operations were conducted in 20 districts during the year. 2,500 square miles were cadastrally surveyed against 2,875 square miles in the previous year, and final publication was completed in 2,387 square miles against 2,140 square miles in the preceding year. The total area of which a record-of-rights has now been completed in the Presidency is 38,565 square miles.

Major settlements.

Major settlement operations were in full swing in seven districts, namely, Pabna, Bogra, Bankura, Birbhum, Nadia, Jessore and Khulna. The new districts in which the operations were commenced this year were Khulna and Birbhum, but owing to financial difficulties only a limited programme was undertaken in Birbhum.

Mymensingh, Midnapore, Tippera-Noakhali and Rajshahi.

26. In Mymensingh the chief work in hand during the year was in connection with diara resumption; in Midnapore and Rajshahi and Tippera-Noakhali it was case-work.

Bankura.

27. As in the previous year the work in Bankura was confined to the Vishnupur subdivision, where nearly six lakhs of plots were pending for bujharat from the previous year.

Jessore.

28. In Jessore a small area of 13 square miles in Keshabpur thana which was left untouched in the previous field season was completed in all stages. Twenty-one officers were employed on the attestation of the last block, which consisted of 641 square miles containing 5½ lakhs of interests. The jamabandi and diara work was, however, light.

Nadia.

29. Twenty-two officers were employed at the beginning of the season, to deal with 3,86,000 interests in C block in Nadia, but they were gradually reduced to thirteen. Attestation was completely finished by August and no janch and objection were pending at the Pujas. In spite of an obstinate strike of the compositors in the beginning of the year, the press gave as much outturn as the budget permitted, and the recovery has already started in the third block. Up-to-date 202 estates have been taken up for revision of land revenue, of which 125 have reached the confirmation stage. Many cases of utbandi tenancies were met with in this settlement and presented interesting problems which will, it is hoped, be now satisfactorily solved with the passing of the Utbandi Tenancy Act since the close of the year.

Pabna-Bogra.

30. This was the second season of settlement operations in Pabna-Bogra and the programme consisted of work in Block B, which consisted of 9 thanas extending to 969 square miles in the north of the Bogra district. Fifty-four square miles of Block A were attested in the previous year, the remaining area of 683 square miles, which fell to this year's share, contained nearly 3 lakhs of interests. In addition to this programme, an area of 68 square miles, mainly round Shahazadpur, containing 108,145 plots was pending for bujharat in Block A. In spite of the serious opposition encountered from the non-co-operation party, which, in 3 out of 10 circles and in parts of others, brought cadastral survey to a complete stop for longer or shorter periods in the critical months of November and December, the whole of this heavy programme was completed except 269 square miles of bujharat in Block B.

Birbhum.

31. The programme of work in Birbhum was curtailed on account of a general reduction of the programme from a four-party to a three-party and subsequently to a two-party basis. The area dealt with is a long thin strip of country stretching from north to south, with the Santhal Parganas on the west and Murshidabad on the east. The non-co-operation movement stood in the way of progress and the records of 625 square miles only were eventually completed by the end of June and deposited in the Berhampore settlement office.

Khulna.

32. The work in Khulna was confined to the first block which comprised the whole of the Satkhira subdivision and turned out to be 895 square miles including the area of the internal rivers but excluding the reserved forests which cover the whole of the southern portion of the subdivision. At the end of the season only 5 square miles of cadastral survey and 7 square miles of khanapuri round the Satkhira Municipality remained pending, and 70 square miles of bujharat. Valuable enquiries were made as to the extent to which failure to keep up embankments was responsible for partial failure of crops in many villages in 1921-22 and the information collected will help the Collector to define the responsibilities of the parties interested in protective works and to secure greater co-operation in planning new schemes.

33. Minor operations were conducted in the districts of the 24-Parganas, Bakarganj, Faridpur, Dacca and Tippera under Chapter X of the Bengal Tenancy Act and in parts of Darjeeling under Act VIII of 1879 and in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Besides these operations, Government sanctioned the proposal to traverse 52 square miles and a resurvey of 84 square miles of land held under expired tea leases in Jalpaiguri, the cost being met from payments made in advance by lessees. The maps and khasra of 21 tea gardens covering an area of 32 square miles were revised. Minor operations.

34. In Darjeeling cadastral survey of 49·42 square miles and khanapuri of 94 square miles with 28,323 plots was completed during the year in connection with the Terai settlement.

35. The maintenance of the record-of-rights with a view to the realisation of arrears of rent by the certificate procedure was carried on in the Fatehsing estate in Murshidabad and in the Mathurapur estate in Malda. A scheme of maintenance to take effect in the Mahisadal estate, in Midnapore, was also approved during the year under report. Maintenance of record.

36. Out of a total of 93,770 boundary marks 50,974 or about 54 per cent. were inspected, of which nearly 7 per cent. were found to be missing. In Government and temporarily-settled estates 905 marks were restored at a cost of Rs. 2,122. Boundary marks.

Waste Lands.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for 1922-23.]

37. Special rules regarding waste lands exist for Chittagong, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and the Sundarbans. In Chittagong and Darjeeling no lease of waste land was given during the year, while in Jalpaiguri the total area leased was 1,751 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 2,259, bringing the total area leased to 104,385 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 71,522. The Sunderbans tract in the district of Bakarganj is being settled raiyatwari under the colonisation rules excluding the forest area declared as "Protected." There are also some *chars* in the khas mahal area of the district, which are unfit for raiyatwari settlement. These are being inspected annually and will be settled as soon as they become fit for cultivation. In Noakhali reclamation work was carried on in certain jungle lands in Burir Char and Char Muhammad Ali. Waste lands.

Government Estates.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

38. The total number of estates under direct management, including those of private individuals managed by Government, was 2,489 with an aggregate annual demand of Rs. 54,20,857 (excluding the Orphanganj Market and the Hastings estate in the 24-Parganas). The percentage of cost of management on the current demand was 8·1 against 9·0 Number and management.

in the previous year. The scheme for reorganisation of the system of management of the Contai Khas mahals in the district of Midnapore, referred to in the last year's report, was kept in abeyance for want of funds. The proposal for the creation of a separate tahsil establishment for the Boyersingha estate was under consideration. The reorganisation scheme of the khas mahals in the district of Tippera, which was fully given effect to during the previous year, worked well during the year under report.

Grant for improvements.

39. A sum of Rs. 1,01,721 was spent on miscellaneous improvements, including agricultural improvements and experiments, tree-planting and repairs to buildings, Rs. 2,651 was spent on sanitary improvements, Rs. 4,156 was spent on tanks and wells, Rs. 62,843 on drainage, irrigation and embankment, and Rs. 1,151 on bridges.

Colonisation of the Sundarbans, Bakarganj.

40. This was the sixteenth year of the colonisation scheme. The original colonisation area consisted of 20 estates resumed under the forest grant rules. Of these, the colonisation of five has been completed and they are consequently excluded from the colonisation programme, 1,600 new colonists were settled during the year on 7,800 acres of land and reclamation work was in full swing, 2,000 acres of land being reclaimed during the year. Another block, Khaprabhanga, has been taken up for wood-cutting. A sum of Rs. 20,000 was advanced to the colonists as land improvement loans. Rupees 13,728 was realised on account of land improvement and Rs. 79 on account of agricultural loans. There were 105 co-operative societies under the Khepupara Central Bank. As before, these societies continued to do good work. A sum of Rs. 62,479 was advanced by the Central Bank to the rural societies, who repaid during the year Rs. 1,26,633 on account of advances taken previously. The Central Bank made a profit of Rs. 14,461 and out of this profit allotted Rs. 500 for industrial scholarships for the benefit of the boys of the colonists. As a result of a few years' working the profits of the Central Bank, the sale supply societies and the rural societies amount to a lakh and a half rupees. The Veterinary Surgeon appointed to render free aid to the tenants treated one thousand two hundred and fifty-nine cases during the last two years. The tenants appear to appreciate the benefits of his services.

24-Parganas.

41. Colonisation work in the 24-Parganas Sundarbans was confined to the resumed estate Saugor Island. A sum of Rs. 7,319 was spent on reclamation, Rs. 1,698 on repairs to, and improvement of, existing embankments, and Rs. 65 on repairs to a bungalow. The tenants here are more contented and happy than the tenants of neighbouring private estates, owing to a sense of security in their tenure, immunity from oppression, and the conviction that they will get fair treatment.

Roads.

42. During the year under report Rs. 1,47,677 was spent on roads and communications in, or leading to, Government estates. Of this,

Rs. 82,379, representing 1½ per cent. of collections from Government estates, was supplied by Government and the balance was met from District Board and other funds.

Education.

43. There were 2,853 schools in Government estates during the year under report attended by 90,701 pupils against 2,315 schools attended by 73,028 pupils in the preceding year. The increase was shared by all the districts in the Presidency except Noakhali, which showed a decrease both in number of schools and pupils.

Wards' and Attached Estates.

[Report on the Administration of Wards' and attached Estates for the year 1922-23.]

Number of estates.

44. The number of estates under the management of the Court of Wards during the preceding year was 66, and 5 new estates were taken charge of during the year under report. Two estates were released, leaving 69 estates under management at the close of the year.

Payment of revenue and cesses due to Government.

45. A sum of Rs. 11,30,736 or 9°·08 per cent. of the total demand on account of revenue and cesses due to Government was paid during the year against 99·1 per cent. in the previous year and Rs. 22,045 remained outstanding.

Rent and cesses due to superior landlords.

46. Rupees 5,74,162 or 79·1 per cent. of the total demand was paid on account of rent and cesses due to superior landlords against 79·2 per cent. in the previous year, and Rs. 1,51,071 remained outstanding at the close of the year. The heaviest balances were due from the Nawab family and Bhowal estates in the district of Dacca, Karatiya estate in Mymensingh, Dasmina estate in Bakarganj, and from the estate of Bharat Chandra Saha in Noakhali.

Collection of rent and cesses.

47. The demand for rent and cesses due to the estates under management during the year was Rs. 1,07,42,342, including an arrear demand of Rs. 63,82,618. Of the total demand Rs. 48,17,187 or 44·8 per cent. was collected against 38·9 per cent. in the previous year. The percentage of total collection on current demand also increased from 97·6 to 110·5. The standard of 100 per cent. collection on current demand was reached or exceeded in 49 estates.

Balance of rent and cesses due to estates.

Rupees 52,00,152 representing 117·8 per cent. on the current demand and 48·3 per cent. on the total demand against the corresponding percentages of 135·9 and 54·2 in the preceding year remained as outstanding balance due to all the estates at the close of the year. Except in the Presidency Division, percentages of balance appreciably diminished in all the divisions, there being very remarkable reduction in the Chittagong Division.

Debts of estates.

48. The total amount of debts of all the estates in the Presidency at the close of the year under report stood at Rs. 34,34,230 against Rs. 33,51,376 in the previous year. The increase is due to the assumption of some new estates with heavy debts and the ascertainment of fresh

liabilities in the case of some other estates. The principal repaid or otherwise reduced during the year amounted to Rs. 4,29,466 and a sum of Rs. 2,38,072 was paid as interest.

Management charges.

49. The percentage of the cost of management on the current rent and cess demand of the estates for the whole Presidency slightly declined, being 14;9 against 15;2 in the preceding year.

Improvements.

50. The standard fixed for expenditure on education is 1 per cent. and on agricultural and sanitary improvements 3 per cent. on the current rent and cess demand in solvent estates. No standard has been fixed for expenditure on works of miscellaneous improvements. The total sums spent on all these heads by the estates in the Presidency amounted to Rs. 2,72,345 against Rs. 2,86,331 in the preceding year. The more important estates maintain schools and dispensaries of their own and also contribute to other public institutions, and some estates bore the expenses of agricultural demonstration work carried on among their tenants.

The education of wards continued to receive careful attention. As in the previous year, no ward was sent for training in survey and settlement work.

Revenue and rent-paying classes.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

Bengal Tenancy Act.

51. The Bengal Tenancy Act is in force throughout the Presidency except the district of Darjeeling, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the town of Calcutta.

Relations between landlords and tenants.

52. The relations between landlords and tenants were generally not very satisfactory and were actually strained in many places, the common causes being the levy of *abwabs* and enhancement of rent. With a few exceptions, the zamindars seldom displayed any practical interest in the improvement of the condition of their tenants. The relations between the tahsildari establishment of Government and the khas mahal tenants remained good.

Rent receipts.

53. In 26 cases proceedings were taken for failure to grant rent receipts under the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act and 13 cases were pending from the preceding year. Of these, 8 cases ended in conviction and 28 cases were either struck off, rejected or dismissed. Only seven cases remained pending at the close of the year.

Illegal cesses.

54. The practice of levying *abwabs* and illegal cesses in addition to legal rent by the agents of private proprietors continues to prevail throughout the province. Such *abwabs* as have the sanction of ancient custom are paid by the tenants usually without protest, and, as in previous years, the provisions of section 75 of the Bengal Tenancy Act remained unused. Signs of changes are not, however, wanting. Settlement operations have shown the tenants that such demands are illegal, and the non-co-operation propaganda has made them more disposed to claim their rights and less inclined to tolerate any sort of oppression.

CHAPTER III.—PROTECTION.

Legislative Authorities.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 154—59.

Course of Legislation.

55. Six Acts were passed by the Bengal Legislative Council during the year 1922-23. They were:— Acts passed.

(*1*) *Bengal Act VI of 1922* [The Bengal Court-fees (Amendment No. II) Act, 1922].—The object of this Act was to remedy certain clerical errors in the Bengal Court-fees (Amendment) Act, 1922, in regard to Article 1 and also to amend Articles 11 and 12 so as to make the meaning of these Articles more clear.

(*2*) *Bengal Act VII of 1922* [The Bengal Excise (Amendment) Act, 1922].—Section 51 of the Bengal Excise Act, 1909, prohibited the sale of spirits or intoxicating drugs to children under the age of fourteen years. The object of the amending Act was to raise the age-limit to sixteen years.

(*3*) *Bengal Act VIII of 1922* [The Bengal Village Chaukidari (Amendment) Act, 1922].—Section 12 of the Village Chaukidari Act, 1870, imposed certain restrictions on the salaries of chaukidars and the assessment of taxes. The amending Act removes these restrictions, and empowers the Panchayat to fix the amounts with the approval of the District Magistrate.

(*4*) *Bengal Act I of 1923* (The Goondas Act, 1923).—The object of this enactment was to secure, by means of a more or less summary procedure, the removal of violent and criminal elements hailing chiefly from other provinces, from Calcutta and its neighbourhood.

(*5*) *Bengal Act II of 1923* [The Calcutta Rent (Amendment) Act, 1923].—Extended the life of the Calcutta Rent Act, 1920, which would have expired on 5th May, 1923, to the end of March 1924.

(*6*) *Bengal Act III of 1923* (The Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923).—The Act aims at liberalising the constitution of the Corporation by providing for the abolition of independent and co-ordinate administrative authorities in the Corporation, conferring greater powers on the Corporation and dividing the responsibilities of the Chairman between a Mayor and a Chief Executive Officer, of whom the former is to be the President of meetings and the latter the head of the Corporation Executive.

Communal representation has been granted temporarily to the Muhammadans for a period of nine years, after which Muhammadan councillors are to be elected by general electorates.

The women of Calcutta have also been enfranchised, and powers of the Corporation in almost all branches of municipal administration have been increased.

Government Bills pending.

56. The following Government Bills were pending at the close of the year:—

(1) The Calcutta Port (Amendment) Bill, 1922, to amend the Calcutta Port Act, 1890. It was referred to a Select Committee in March 1923.

(2) The Bengal Aerial Ropeways Bill, 1923, to authorise, facilitate and regulate the construction and working of aerial ropeways in Bengal was introduced on the 14th March, 1923, and referred to a Select Committee on the 22nd March.

(3) The Indian Salt (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1923, to amend the Indian Salt Act, 1882, was introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council on the 14th March 1923. The object of the Bill was to remove from the Indian Salt Act, 1882, those provisions which now require the presence of police officers at all searches made by officers of the Salt Department for the detection of offences under the Act. The Bill was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 21st *idem*, but was postponed to the next session of the Council.

(4) The Calcutta Improvement (Amendment) Bill, 1923, further to amend the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911, was introduced in Council on the 14th March, 1923 and published in a subsequent Gazette.

Private Bills pending.

57. (1) and (2) Two separate Bills were introduced on the 9th February 1923 by Babus Jatindra Nath Basu and Surendra Nath Mullick, non-official members of the Council, to amend the Calcutta University Act of 1857 and the Indian Universities Act, 1904. The main object of both these Bills was to revise the constitution of the Calcutta University and to provide for increased control over the finances of the University. These Bills were published and circulated for opinion before introduction.

(3) On the 25th January 1923, Mr. Bijoy Prosad Singh Roy, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. It was published and circulated for opinion before introduction.

(4) On the 25th January 1923, Babu Indu Bhushan Dutta, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a Bill to amend the Village Chaukidari Act, 1870, with a view to giving power to the Panchayet to determine the number of chaukidars to be appointed. The Bill was published on the 7th February and circulated for opinion.

(5) On the 25th January 1923, Shah Syed Emdadul Huq, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. The Bill was published on the 7th February 1923, and circulated for opinion to all the District Boards. The principal object of the Bill was to give an accused President of a Panchayat an opportunity of explaining the charges made against him before he is removed from office.

(6) On the 9th February 1923, Major Hassan Suhrawardy, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a Bill further to amend the Bengal Cruelty to Animals Act, 1869, and to amend the Bengal Cruelty to Animals Act, 1920. This Bill was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 14th *idem* and was circulated for opinion. The principal object of the Bill was to increase the powers of the Magistrates in dealing with cases of cruelty to animals and to provide for the confiscation of animals cruelly treated.

(7) On the 9th February 1923, Professor S. C. Mukharji, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic in Calcutta and its suburbs. It was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 14th *idem* and was circulated for opinion.

58. (1) On the 5th July 1922, Shâh Syed Emdadul Huq moved for referrring the Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces Registration (Amendment) Bill, 1921, to a Select Committee. The motion was lost on a division. Bills rejected or withdrawn.

(2) On the same date, the motion for introducing the Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1922, by Shah Syed Emdadul Huq was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

(3) On the 21st November 1922, Shah Syed Emdadul Haq moved again for leave to introduce his Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919, which he had previously withdrawn. The motion was rejected by the Council.

(4) On the 25th January 1923, Mr. J. Campbell Forrester, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, introduced a Bill to extend and to amend the Calcutta Rent Act, 1920. The Bill was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* and circulated for opinion. On the 9th February 1923, an assurance was given by the Government that they would take steps to extend the present Act for a further period, and on that assurance Mr. J. Campbell Forrester withdrew his motion for referring his Bill to a Select Committee.

(5) On the 15th March 1923, Shah Syed Emdadul Huq moved for leave to introduce a Bill for the preservation of certain kinds of fish fry in Bengal. The motion was lost on a division.

(6) On the 15th March 1923, the same member moved for leave to introduce a Bill for the suppression of brothels and immoral traffic in Bengal. The motion was rejected by the Council.

Bengal Police.

[The Report on Police Administration in the Bengal Presidency for the year 1922.]

59. The Eastern Frontier Rifles were at full strength at the end of the year. Very valuable service was rendered by parties deputed outside headquarters for the preservation of peace and order, especially on the occasion of the Mohurrum riots at Telinipara in the Hooghly district and in the Midnapore district. Military Police.

Administration.

60. Some improvements were effected in the pay and status of officers in the Bengal Police Service and a further step was taken towards removing the unpopularity of urban duties in the lower ranks by the grant of compensatory allowances to constables employed in towns in Hooghly, Howrah and the 24-Parganas. Small concessions were also granted to investigating officers in river districts, where the rate for boat hire has long been inadequate.

Recruitment.

61. Recruitment for the subordinate ranks, in which an improvement was noticed last year, continued to be satisfactory, and the actual strength of the subordinate force at the end of the year was only short by 409 of the total sanctioned strength of 24,102. There was, however, a further decrease from 47·1 per cent. in the number of local recruits enrolled as constables, due largely to the rejection of applicants as unfit.

Discipline.

62. There was an increase in the number of departmental punishments during the year, due to the attempt to enforce a higher standard of discipline. But there was a decrease in the number both of criminal complaints and of civil suits brought against police officers; and the number of men judicially punished fell from 247 to 234 (including 153 cases under the Police Act). There was no conviction for torture during the period under review. The number of officers and men departmentally rewarded was 6,403 as against 6,468 in the previous year.

Health.

63. Some improvement in the health of the force was indicated by the figures of cases of admission to hospital. The supply of articles indispensable for good health, such as water-proofs, mosquito curtains and beds, however, still continued to be inadequate.

River Police.

64. Drastic retrenchment was effected in the River Police by abolishing the Ganges and Brahmaputra Divisions. The river area comprised in these jurisdictions was in fact too large for adequate patrol by the force available, and its withdrawal means rather concentration of resources than cessation of a previously effective service. Funds were found for the construction of a slipway at the River Police dockyard at Narayanganj, which can now dock all police vessels during the dry season. This dockyard also did a certain amount of work for Government vessels in other departments. Besides the assistance given to the District Police in surveillance and investigation the River Police did much useful work in the control of river traffic, and in life saving and salvage of capsized boats. The number of prosecutions under the Inland Steam Vessels Act rose to 833, and 64 persons were saved from drowning.

Crime on the Railways.

65. Statistics for crime on the railways were vitiated by the strike on the East Indian Railway which increased the work of the police, and at the same time impaired the accuracy of the returns through failure to report cases. The most noticeable feature was the increase in the combined figures for missing goods and yard thefts on this Railway from 3,736 to 5,588. Special arrangements were made during the year for the superintendence of police patrols in the neighbourhood of Asansol which is notorious for thefts from goods trains.

Village Police.

At the beginning of the year the village police system was seriously interfered with by the non-co-operation movement, but the evil effects had worn off before its close and a normal state of affairs was restored. There was room for much improvement in punctuality in the collection and payment of the wages of chaukidars.

Ordinary Crime.

66. There was a decrease in the total volume of reported crime, which was accounted for in the statistics almost entirely under the head of burglary and was probably due in part to the suppression of cases through the non-co-operation movement. The figures for serious offences, however, marked an increase in lawlessness and criminality. The number of riots, dacoities, murders and robberies exceeded in each case those reported in 1921, which had shown a large increase over the figures for the preceding year.

Particularly significant was the increase from 613 to 946 in the number of cases of riot and unlawful assembly to which all ranges contributed. Land disputes accounted for only one-third of these cases. A large number were the results of obstruction of district officials in the execution of their duties, and of picketing and similar manifestations. In four districts small bodies of police faced with turbulent and overwhelming crowds had no alterative but to fire in self-defence. Unfortunately this resulted in the loss of fourteen lives. Industrial unrest swelled the number of riots, several occurring in connection with the East Indian Railway strike. A disquieting feature was the re-appearance at Telinipara, in the Hooghly district, on a scale which was not seen in Bengal for several years, of communal rioting arising out of a religious dispute.

Dacoity.

67. Dacoity is a form of crime peculiarly responsive to any disturbance of law and order, and it was not surprising to find that the number of true cases under investigation during the year was 896 as against 716 in 1921 and 576, the annual average for the quinquennium (1916—1920). The increase was largely traceable to the activities of certain notorious gangs whose operations were facilitated by the general spirit of lawlessness prevalent. Several of these gangs were broken up before the end of the year. In two cases at least they were led by escaped convicts from the Rajshahi Jail. A disquieting feature was the commission of dacoities in Eastern Bengal by mixed gangs of ordinary criminals and young men of the middle class. There was an increase in the number of convictions obtained in dacoity cases, but bad-livelihood prosecutions, which could only be conducted with the active co-operation of the villagers themselves, remained stationary. Volunteer defence parties were organised in many districts of the Presidency, and in many instances they reflected great credit on the courage of their members and afforded conclusive proof that the surest means of protection for a village lies in the determination of its inhabitants to help one another and in the knowledge among thieves that such determination exists.

Criminal Investigation Department and Intelligence Branch.

68. No serious offence against life or property of a specifically revolutionary character occurred during the year. It was impossible to make any reduction in the strength of the Intelligence Branch or of the Criminal Investigation Department. The former department worked at full pressure in combating seditious activities. The latter rendered valuable assistance to the districts in dealing with important cases of dacoity, swindling and similar crimes and showed a good record of progress in the scientific methods of the finger-print and photographic bureau.

Expenditure.

69. The total expenditure of the department amounted in round figures to Rs. 1,48,00,000, an increase of one lakh over that of the previous year. The increase was attributable chiefly to the accrual of increments in pay according to scales sanctioned in former years. Expenditure on building was reduced by five and a half lakhs to Rs. 11,63,000 or nearly 33 per cent., compared with that for the previous year. Of this amount over 8 lakhs was spent on the completion of works started in the previous year and on repairs, expenditure on new construction being limited to 2½ lakhs only. The inadequacy of the police buildings has been frequently emphasised, and though the present financial position may render the curtailment of measures for improving the housing of the force unavoidable for the time being, it is hoped that the urgency of the matter will not be overlooked.

Police Administration in Calcutta.

[The Report on the Police Administration in the town of Calcutta and its suburbs for the year 1922.]

Crime.

70. There was an increase in the number of reported offences mainly under local and special laws, due to greater attention to infractions of municipal regulations and to breaches of the Cruelty to Animals and Hackney-carriage Acts. No grave case of rioting occurred, and the number of less serious disturbances of the peace declined slightly. Though seven dacoities were reported against four in the previous year, offences against property on the whole were not so numerous and a larger percentage of the value of property stolen was recovered by the police. The prevalence of robbery throughout the year continued to be a disquieting feature. Fewer cases were reported, but the tatol still remained abnormally high in spite of the more vigorous preventive action by which security was taken from 659 persons as against 589 in the previous year. There has been a considerable improvement since the power of ordering hooligans out of the metropolitan area or the province was conferred by the passing of the Goonda Act in March last. In the first six months of the year, 45 cases of robbery were reported as compared with 140 in 1921. Most of these occurred before the Act was passed. In the short period during which the Act was in exestence robbery and other forms of hooliganism were naturally not entirely stamped out, but the enforcement

of the Act, together with a system of police patrols in areas where crime was prevalent, produced, on the whole, satisfactory results.

Public vehicles Department.

71. The registration of vehicles and the problem of traffic control continued to absorb an increasing amount of attention. Endeavours to maintain a reasonable standard in public vehicles were reflected in the largely decreased number of new taxi-cabs registered and professional licenses issued, the policy being to weed out unserviceable conveyances and to enforce a type in accordance with the revised rules. The income of the Hackney Carriage branch did not cover the expenditure incurred on it.

The number of persons killed and injured in accidents caused by motor vehicles declined from 1,422 in 1921 to 974.

Buildings.

72. The only buildings constructed during the year were some staff quarters at the new Police Hospital at Bhowanipur. For financial reasons progress with other schemes was impossible and the problem of accommodation remained unsolved, and is indeed becoming more and more difficult. The heavy rent-roll is increasing from year to year, for in many cases Government have no choice but to accept the accommodation available, however unsuitable, at the high rates demanded. The seriousness of the resulting situation is fully realised by Government, but adequate amelioration seems feasible only by means of a loan from which a building programme could be financed. The possibility of obtaining such a loan is under consideration, while projects are being worked out for the provision of Government buildings at suitable centres to house the police-stations together with the investigating and patrol staff, so as to replace most of the houses at present hired at high rents. Such a measure would provide police-stations accessible to the public and would promote the health, efficiency and discipline of the force.

The year's work.

73. The year opened with the non-co-operation campaign in full blast. Deliberate defiance by certain sections of the population, of the orders prohibiting meetings and processions, seditious speeches and writings in which the police were subjected to vilification and the picketing of shops accompanied by intimidation produced most trying conditions in which the police maintained order with commendable loyalty and restraint. Normal conditions were gradually restored, and in spite of spasmodic attempts later to revive a waning agitation, the closing period of the year was without incident. All ranks acquitted themselves well throughout an exacting time.

Mortality caused by wild animals and snakes.

[Report on the above and measures taken for the destruction of wild animals and snakes during 1922. Statistics of British India, Part V—Area, Population and Public Health.]

Wild animals.

74. The number of persons killed by wild animals rose from 271 in 1921 to 300 in 1922, showing an increase in the number of deaths caused by elephants, leopards, bears and other animals.

Tigers were responsible for 42 deaths against 46 in 1921.

Snakes.

The number of persons who died from snake-bites rose from 4,165 in 1921 to 4,386 in 1922. The increase occurred in the Burdwan, Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions.

Destruction of wild animals.

75. The number of wild animals killed was 967. Rewards paid for the destruction of wild animals and snakes totalled Rs. 4,513-8 and Rs. 170-6, respectively.

Criminal Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1922.]

Judicial staff.

76. For sessions work, the staff consisted of 21 Sessions Judges and 10 Additional Sessions Judges employed throughout the year. The Subordinate Judges vested with the powers of Assistant Sessions Judge were employed in ten districts who, however, only disposed of 92 cases made over to them. There were also fifteen temporary Additional Sessions Judges employed for varying periods in different districts on Sessions work.

The magisterial staff employed at the close of the year, including that of the Presidency town, consisted of 355 stipendiary and 701 honorary magistrates. Of the 355 stipendiary magistrates, 250 exercised first, 65 second, and 40 third class powers.

There were 133 benches of magistrates constituted from among 609 honorary magistrates in the mufassal.

Offences reported.

77. There were 349,752 criminal offences reported during the year, an increase of 33,050 on the figures of 1921.

Of this number 173,658 were under the Indian Penal Code and 176,094 under special and local laws. These totals are more by 6,743 and 26,307, respectively, than those of 1921. The increase was most marked in Mymensingh, Faridpur, the 24-Parganas and Dacca as regards offences under the Penal Code; and in the Presidency town and the 24-Parganas as regards offences under special and local laws.

Of the total number of cases under inquiry, 299,798 were found to be true, and of these 236,794 were brought to trial. Inquiries were pending in 19,211 cases at the close of the year. Compared with 1921, the number of cases found to be true and the number brought to trial show an increase of 31,800 and 29,179, respectively.

ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

I.—Presidency Magistrates' Courts.

Total cases for trial.

78. Of the total number of cases brought to trial, 102,010 were in the courts of the police and municipal magistrates in the Presidency town, and 134,784 in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal.

79. The number of cases brought before the presidency magistrates, including the municipal magistrates, was 14,221 more than in 1921. There was a large increase of cases under special and local laws, and particularly under the Police Act and the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The increase of cases under the Penal Code was almost wholly accounted for by offences affecting public health. Presidency Magistrates, Calcutta.

On the other hand, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of offences under the Hackney and Stage Carriages Acts.

The following table shows the number of cases disposed of and witnesses examined by the different classes of magistrates in Calcutta:—

	1921.		1922.	
	Cases disposed of.	Witnesses examined.	Cases disposed of.	Witnesses examined.
Presidency magistrates other than municipal magistrates.				
Stipendiary magistrates ..	9,315		13,853	
Honorary magistrates sitting singly	62,243	22,992	68,011	20,779
Honorary Benches ..	2,263		3,887	
Municipal magistrates ..	14,199	3,982		5,306

The percentage of convictions before stipendiary magistrates amounted to 74·2 and before honorary magistrates sitting singly and Benches 88·9 and 86·8 respectively. The percentage of convictions before municipal magistrates was 95·8. Sentences of imprisonment passed in the cases of 18 youthful offenders were commuted to detention in a reformatory school. Six thousand seven hundred and four convicted persons were warned and discharged.

II.—Magistrates outside Calcutta.

80. At the opening of the year, 6,860 cases, besides cases of lunatics, were pending before magistrates outside Calcutta. During the year, 134,789 cases, including references under sections 347 and 349, Criminal Procedure Code, were brought to trial, 134,056 were disposed of, and 7,563 remained pending at its close. The number of cases brought to trial was 14,957 more than in 1921, the increase being in cases under the Indian Penal Code (3,363) and also under special and local laws (11,594). Under the Indian Penal Code the increase in offences against property (1,317) and in offences affecting the human body (1,245) was very prominent. Cases for trial in Courts of Magistrates outside Calcutta.

The largest increase in the number of cases instituted was in the 24-Parganas (7,354) and the largest decrease in Birbhum (551). The increase in the 24-Parganas occurred in cases both under the Penal Code and under

special and local laws; the increase under the former head was chiefly in offences against property. The decrease in Birbhum was chiefly in cases under the Excise Acts.

The disposals by different classes of magistrates and the percentage of conviction are shown below:—

	Tried regularly.	Tried summarily.	Percentage of conviction.
District magistrates	168	44	60·1
Subordinate stipendiary magistrates ..	79,888	27,931	46·7
Honorary magistrates	14,027	382	47·2
Benches of magistrates	2,902	8,496	74·4
Special magistrates	204	....	11·3

Punishments.

81. In the cases of 27 youthful offenders the sentence of imprisonment was commuted to one of detention in a reformatory school. Seven hundred and seventeen persons against 669 in 1921 were released on probation under section 562 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Sentences of whipping were passed on 288 persons against 344 in the preceding year. The fines imposed aggregated Rs. 7,85,003. Rupees 6,35,067 were realised, of which Rs. 95,853 were paid as compensation to complainants.

Miscellaneous proceedings under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

82. In addition to criminal trials, the following were the more important classes of work dealt with by magistrates in the mufassal:—

There were 2,326 proceedings under Chapter VIII, Criminal Procedure Code, to prevent a breach of the peace, in which 10,963 persons were involved. The number of cases and persons involved was more than the number brought before the courts in 1921. Of the persons concerned, 2,233 were required to execute bonds to keep the peace, in addition to the persons bound down on conviction. The number of persons dealt with under this chapter was largest in Mymensingh (1,396), followed by Bakarganj (1,372) and Dacca (1,175). Compared with the figures of 1921, there was a noticeable increase in the number of proceedings of this class in Dacca, Pabna, Mymensingh and Dinajpur and a marked decrease in Faridpur and Khulna.

In 1,899 cases, 4,106 persons were called upon to show cause why they should not give security to be of good behaviour, and the orders were made absolute against 3,302. Of these, 3,047 failed to give the required security and were imprisoned in default, 106 after reference to the courts of session under section 123 of the Code, and 2,941 under orders of magistrates, for terms not exceeding one year.

Two hundred and ninety-five complainants were ordered to pay compensation to accused persons, under section 250 of the Code, the accusations having been found to be frivolous or vexatious.

Proceedings for maintenance under Chapter XXXVI of the Code were taken against 822 persons, and orders were made absolute against 190.

Witnesses.

83. The number of witnesses examined in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal was 345,634 as compared with 327,371 in 1921. The number who attended and were discharged without examination was 31·2 per cent. of the whole number in attendance; the percentage in the preceding year was 31. The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses of their attendance rose from Rs. 3,09,363 in 1921 to Rs. 3,29,346 in 1922.

III.—Courts of Session.

Commitments, etc.

84. The number of cases committed for trial or referred during the year was 1,331 against 1,302 in 1921; and the number decided, including the cases pending from the previous year, was 1,269 against 1,350. There were 265 cases pending at the close of the year. Commitments increased in 13, decreased in 12 districts, and remained the same in one district.

Results of trials.

85. There were 4,058 persons or 192 more than in 1921 under trial before the courts of session. The cases of 3,218 persons were decided, 29 persons died or escaped, and 811 persons remained under trial at the close of the year. Of the 3,218 persons tried, 1,631 or 50·6 per cent. were convicted and 1,387 were acquitted or discharged, and the cases of 200 persons referred to the High Court under sections 307 and 374 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Jury trials.

86. The number of persons tried by jury was 2,839 and, of the persons so tried, the Sessions Judge approved of the verdict of the jury in respect of 2,451 and disapproved of it in respect of 388 persons.

The Sessions Judge disagreed with the verdict of the jury in regard to 187 persons and referred the cases to the High Court under section 307 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Duration of cases.

87. The average duration of sessions trials, from the date of commitment to the date of decision, fell from 61:9 days in 1921 to 53:5 days in 1922.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION.

I.—High Court.

Appeals.

88. At the opening of the year, 44 appeals from sentences or orders of criminal courts were pending before the High Court. During the year, 598 appeals were preferred, and 569 were decided, leaving 73 pending at its close. Four appeals were preferred by the local Government against orders of acquittal.

Results of appeals.

89. Four hundred and twenty-seven appeals against sentences of courts of session were decided. The orders of the lower courts were upheld in 372, reversed in 13, and modified in 36 instances. Six cases were remanded for re-trial.

One hundred and forty appeals from the orders of magistrates of the Presidency town were decided, the orders being affirmed in 122, modified in 7, and reversed in 9 cases. Two cases were remanded for re-trial.

Two of the four appeals referred by the local Government against orders of acquittal were decided during the year. Both these appeals were dismissed. In one case, the accused was charged with offences under sections 417 and 420 of the Indian Penal Code and was acquitted by an Honorary Presidency Magistrate. In the other case, the accused was charged with an offence under section 273 (*2*) of the Bengal Municipal Act and was acquitted by a sub-deputy magistrate.

II.—Appellate courts subordinate to the High Court.

Sessions courts.

90. There were 147 appeals pending before the courts of session at the opening of the year. During the year, 3,054 appeals were preferred, 3,017 were decided, and 186 remained pending at its close. The number of appeals preferred was 30 more than in 1921. In the appeals decided 5,286 persons were concerned. The appeals of 1,167 persons or 22 per cent. were summarily dismissed; 1,914 appellants, whose appeals were admitted, were altogether unsuccessful; 954 obtained a reduction or alteration of sentence; 1,129 were acquitted; and in the cases of 121 appellants, a new trial or further inquiry was ordered. The case of one person was referred to the High Court.

The proportion of persons whose appeals were wholly unsuccessful, successful in obtaining a modification of the original orders, and successful in obtaining their reversal, was 58·2, 18 and 21·3, respectively. Of those concerned in admitted appeals only, the proportions were 46·4, 23·1 and 27·4 per cent. In the case of admitted appeals, the results on the whole were more favourable to appellants than in the previous year.

Magistrates' courts.

91. In the courts of magistrates, 185 appeals were pending at the opening of the year. During the year, 3,334 appeals were preferred, 3,310 were decided, and 207 remained pending at its close. The number preferred was 129 more than in 1921.

The number of persons whose appeals were decided by courts of magistrates was 5,635. Of these, the appeals of 1,205 were summarily dismissed, and the sentences on 2,350, whose appeals were admitted, were confirmed, making a total of 3,555 wholly unsuccessful appellants, or 63 per cent. Of the remainder, 601 appellants or 10·6 per cent. obtained a modification of the sentences passed on them, 1,382 or 24·5 per cent. their total annulment and in the case of 94 appellants, a new trial or further inquiry was ordered. The cases of three persons were referred to the High Court. Compared with 1921, the results were more favourable to appellants.

General.

Trials of European British subjects.

92. The cases of 107 European British subjects were decided during the year, as against 89 in the previous year. All of these were dealt with by magistrates. Of the accused persons, 9 claimed to be tried by a mixed jury.

In the cases disposed of, 68 persons were convicted and 39 were acquitted. In 57 cases the convictions were for offences under special and local laws, in 4 cases for offences against property, in 3 cases for offences affecting the human body, in 3 cases for criminal intimidation, etc., and in one case for an offence affecting the public health, etc. The number of European British subjects tried was largest in the 24-Parganas (45).

General.

93. Compared with the figures of 1921, there was a considerable increase in the number of criminal cases disposed of by magistrates both in the mufassal and in the Presidency town. There was also an increase in the appellate and revisional work disposed of by magistrates, but in the courts of session there was a general decrease in the outturn of such work. In the High Court there was an increase in original and revisional work but a decrease in appellate work.

Thirty-three persons (10 in Nadia, 6 in Jessore, 5 in Chittagong, 3 in Dacca, 1 in Noakhali and 8 in the Presidency town) were under trial for offences against the State. Of these, 7 were acquitted, 23 convicted, and 3 remained under trial at the close of the year.

During the year under review, illegal sentences of whipping were passed in five cases, as against six in 1921.

Receipts and charges.

94. After debiting, as usual, to the administration of criminal justice, a portion of the salaries of judicial officers, calculated according to the time which their returns show them to have devoted to it, the total charges for the year amounted to Rs. 38,56,985. Of this amount Rs. 20,12,123 were for the salaries of judicial officers; Rs. 1,59,761 for fixed and temporary copying establishments; Rs. 1,87,317 for process-servers; Rs. 7,49,830 for other establishments; Rs. 7,47,954 for contingencies and refunds.

The receipts amounted to Rs. 20,64,152. Of this amount, Rs. 10,39,503 were under fines, Rs. 1,61,263 under process-fees; Rs. 1,73,920 under copying and comparing fees; Rs. 5,41,926 under court-fee stamp receipts other than the above, and Rs. 1,47,570 were miscellaneous receipts. Compared with the figures of 1921, the receipts show an increase of over Rs. 3,72,000 and the charges of over Rs. 4,32,000.

Criminal Justice in the scheduled district of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

95. The number of cases brought to trial during 1922 was 265, and the total number of cases disposed of 491. The number of witnesses examined was 956. The total number of persons under trial including those awaiting trial from the previous year was 557; of these 362 were discharged or acquitted and 152 convicted. Of the cases brought to trial 55 were for theft, 23 for criminal trespass and 43 for offences under special and local laws.

Civil Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1922.]

Judicial Staff.

96. The permanent civil judicial staff employed in the Presidency during 1922 consisted of 15 High Court Judges, 21 District Judges, 10 Additional District Judges, a Chief Judge and six Judges of the Presidency Small Cause Court, three Provincial Small Cause Court Judges who exercised also the powers of a Subordinate Judge, 43 Subordinate Judges and 235 Munsifs. In addition four executive officers exercised the powers of a Subordinate Judge or Small Cause Court Judge, and two the powers of a Munsif.

ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

1.—High Court.

Original suits instituted.

97. The number of civil suits pending on the Original Side of the High Court at the end of 1921 was 5,378, including 105 suits received by transfer from other courts, and the number instituted during 1922 was 3,707, including 34 suits received by transfer from other courts and three remanded for re-trial during the year, making a total of 9,085 for disposal in 1922. Of the suits instituted during 1922, 2,787 were for money or movable property, 203 were mortgage suits, and 232 were for immovable property.

The value of suits for specific money claims was Rs. 6,33,48,455 as compared with Rs. 5,22,26,287 in the previous year.

Original suits disposed of.

98. The number of suits decided in 1922 was 3,763. The number undisposed of at the end of the year was 5,322. The number pending at the close of the year was less than the number pending at the close of the previous year by 56. There were 2,720 suits pending over one year, showing a decrease of 121 on the figures of the previous year.

Probates and letters of administration, etc.

99. During the year 539 petitions for probates and letters of administration, and 18,630 interlocutory applications (including applications for the appointment of guardians under the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890, for the appointment of guardian *ad litem*, for the appointment of receivers, for injunctions, for discovery of documents, for execution, for summonses to witnesses, for special leave to file written statements after time) were disposed of. Of the interlocutory applications, 10,140 were disposed of by the Court or by a Judge in chambers and the remainder (8,490) by the Registrar and the Master.

Awards under the Indian Arbitration Act, 1899.

100. The number of awards filed and that of applications made in execution thereof were 327 and 201, respectively.

Appeals from the original jurisdiction.

101. The number of appeals pending from the previous year was 78, and 155 new appeals were preferred to the Appellate Side of the Court. Of the total number, 43 were dismissed for default or otherwise not prosecuted, and 106 were decided. Of the latter, the decrees of the courts of

first instance were affirmed in 66, modified in 19, and reversed in 18 cases; three cases were remanded for re-trial. Eighty-four appeals remained undecided at the close of the year.

Insolvency cases.

102. The number of cases, under the old and new Acts, pending in the Insolvency Court at the commencement of the year, was 163 and 1,052 respectively, and the number instituted during the year was 245. Of the 1,460 cases for disposal, 47 were disposed of, the adjudication being set aside or superseded or the petition being withdrawn or dismissed in 24 and the insolvents obtaining relief in 23 cases. Two thousand six hundred and seventy-two applications of a miscellaneous character were also disposed of during the year.

Duration of sittings.

103. For the hearing of original suits and applications, one Judge sat alone for 7 days, two Judges sat separately and simultaneously for 8 days, three Judges sat separately and simultaneously for 95 days, and four Judges sat separately and simultaneously for 84 days, and five Judges sat for 1 day. The Insolvency Court engaged the time of one Judge for 10 days. Appeals from the Original Side and references under section 51 (*1*) of the Indian Income Tax Act, 1918, occupied a bench of two Judges for 103 days, and a bench of three Judges for two days, respectively, against 105 days and two days in 1921.

Appeals to the Privy Council.

104. Nine appeals from the Original Side were pending from the previous year, and one appeal was admitted during the year. Of these, four were disposed of by the Privy Council, two were settled before the paper-books were transmitted to the Privy Council, and four remained pending at the close of the year.

Financial results.

105. The following figures exhibit the financial results for the last three years, including under the head of expenditure the salaries of the Judges:—

Year.	Receip'ts (*a*).	Receipts (*b*).	Expenditure.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1920	18,82,225	4,74,512	5,50,276
1921	15,43,505	6,15,935	6,28,604
1922	17,97,855	7,04,634	6,83,835

(*a*) Including the duty raised on the grant of probates and letters of administration.
(*b*) Excluding ditto ditto ditto.

II.—Civil Courts in the mufassal subordinate to the High Court.

106. The court of the 4th munsif at Midnapore Sadar ceased to exist with the opening of a new munsifi at Jhargram in that district with effect from the 27th February 1922.

The village of Daudkandi was transferred from the jurisdiction of the sadar munsifi of Comilla in the district of Tippera to that of Narayanganj munsifi in the district of Dacca.

The villages of Mugarkhanda, Char Chandra, Bhasaldi, Subajnagar and Karali were excluded from the Chikandi munsifi in the district of Faridpur and were included in that of Munshiganj in the district of Dacca.

Original suits instituted.

107. The number of suits instituted in 1922 was 604,406, a decrease of 39,639 on the figures of the previous year.

The decrease occurred in money, rent and title suits to the extent of 11·1, 5·1 and 3·8 per cent., respectively.

The total value of suits instituted in 1922 amounted to Rs. 9,52,97,262, showing a decrease of Rs. 67,67,805 on the total for 1921. This decrease is mainly due to the fall in institutions under all classes of suits.

Local distribution.

108. There was a decrease in the number of suits instituted in all the districts, except Dacca, Mymensingh and Bakarganj.

The largest number of suits was instituted in the district of Mymensingh (69,603), where the number of money, rent and title suits 26,322, 35,267 and 8,014, respectively) was the heaviest in the province. In no other district did the institutions exceed 50,000.

The number of suits disposed of was 630,070, a decrease of 74,212, on the figures of 1921.

Of the total number, 603,690 were disposed of by Munsifs, 14,605 by Subordinate Judges, 11,315 by Small Cause Court Judges, and 400 by District and Additional Judges. The figures show a decrease in all grades of courts.

Average duration of suits.

109. The average duration of suits (contested and uncontested) decided by the several grades of courts is given in the following statement:—

		District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.	Munsifs.	Small Cause Court Judges.
		Days.	Days.	Days.	Days.
Under ordinary procedure.	Contested ..	340	570	276	....
	Uncontested ..	256	343	137	....
Under Small Cause Court procedure.	Contested ..	....	126	126	126
	Uncontested ..	....	78	64	64

The results show an increase in the average duration of (1) uncontested suits disposed of by District Judges under the ordinary procedure, (2) contested and uncontested suits decided by Subordinate Judges under the Small Cause Court procedure, (3) contested suits disposed of by Munsifs

both under the ordinary and Small Cause Court procedures, and (4) contested suits decided by the Small Cause Court Judges, and a decrease in the other cases.

Pending suits.

110. The number of suits pending at the close of the year was 176,300, against 190,560 in the previous year. The decrease is chiefly due to smaller institutions during the year.

Of the pending suits, 16,190 had been pending for more than a year, 61,583 for more than six months and 27,364 for more than three months. The figures show an increase in the number of suits pending over one year, and a decrease in the number pending for more than six months, and three months. Of the suits pending over one year, 12,892 were in the courts of Munsifs, and 3,298 in the courts of District and Subordinate Judges, the figures showing an increase of 1,104 and 184, respectively, as compared with 1921. A large proportion of these suits (64·6 per cent.) were, however, pending for final decree.

Execution proceedings.

111. There were 129,688 applications for execution of decrees pending from the previous year, and 463,453 applications were made during the year. Realization was complete in 150,227 cases and partial in 93,481. In 222,522 cases proceedings were returned as infructuous, and 118,039 cases remained pending at the close of the year. The number of cases in which execution proceedings were unsuccessful was most marked in Dacca, Nadia and Faridpur, the percentages of totally infructuous proceedings in these districts being 70·7, 68·4 and 58·9, respectively. The total amount realized in courts other than Small Cause Courts was Rs. 2,56,71,353.

Debtors were imprisoned in 63 cases; moveable property was sold in 7,301 and immoveable property in 86,052 cases.

III.—Calcutta Small Cause Court.

Number of suits.

112. The number of suits instituted and decided in the Presidency Court of Small Causes during 1922 and the number pending at its close were 22,926, 24,895 and 4,695, respectively, showing a decrease of 1,448, 1,689 and 677, respectively, on the figures of the previous year. Sixty-five applications were filed under section 626 of the Calcutta Municipal Act (Bengal Act III of 1899).

The decrease in institutions was spread over all classes of suits.

The total value of the litigation was Rs. 75,78,050, against Rs. 78,56,258, in the preceding year.

The average duration of contested and uncontested suits was 107·5 and 55·7 days, against 106 and 77·2, respectively, in 1921.

Execution of decrees.

113. Of 15,856 applications for the execution of decrees dealt with during the year, including 3,574 pending from the previous year, 14,691

were determined and 1,165 remained pending at the close of the year. Of the latter, 193 were more than three months old. Of the applications disposed of, 6,798 resulted in whole or partial satisfaction of the decrees granted, 4,535 were returned as wholly infructuous and 3,358 were transferred to other courts.

The total amount realized was Rs. 6,21,321, as compared with Rs. 6,23,738 in the previous year.

APPELLATE JURISDICTION.

I.—High Court.

Appeals under section 15 of the Letters Patent.

114. One hundred and fifty-five appeals from decisions on the Original Side were filed during the year and 78 were pending at its commencement. Of the total, 149 were decided and 84 remained pending at the close of the year. The number of appeals disposed of was 29 more than in 1921. On the Appellate Side, 64 such appeals were filed during the year and 30 were pending at its commencement. Of these, 69 were decided and 33 remained pending at the close of the year.

II.—Appeals from the Subordinate Civil Courts.

Appeals to the High Court from subordinate Courts.

115. The statement below shows the number of first and second appeals from the decrees and orders of the provincial courts of original and appellate jurisdiction, respectively, which came before the High Court and were decided during the year. The figures include appeals from the courts of Assam. The number of first appeals from decrees and orders shows an increase of 113 and 2, and of second appeals from decrees and orders an increase of 89 and 26, respectively, compared with the figures of the preceding year:—

—	Pending at the end of 1921.	Referred.	Decided.	Pending at the end of 1922.
FIRST APPEALS:				
From decrees	453	337	308	482
From orders	265	234	229	270
SECOND APPEALS.				
From decrees	5,323	2,705	3,548	4,480
From orders	143	181	182	142
Total ..	6,184	3,457	4,267	5,374

The following table shows the results of appeals decided by the High Court affecting District Judges and Subordinate Judges:— Results of Appeals.

		Affirmed.		Modified or Reversed.	
		District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.	District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.
Appeals from	Original decrees ..	76	77	20	37
	Appellate decrees ..	916	700	149	132
Miscellaneous appeals		57	58	47	31

III.—Appellate Courts subordinate to the High Court.

116. Thirteen thousand eight hundred and thirty appeals were instituted in 1922, showing a decrease of 2,085, as compared with the previous year. Appeals instituted.

Of the appeals instituted, 6,411 were in title suits, 5,381 in rent suits, and 2,038 in suits for money or moveables. The numbers show a decrease of 302, 1,718 and 65, respectively.

The number of appeals valued at sums below Rs. 10 and between Rs. 10 and Rs. 50 was 1,465 and 4,418, respectively. The total value of the appeals instituted in the subordinate courts was Rs. 28,46,084 and was less than that of 1921 by Rs. 75,347.

117. The number of appeals decided was 19,531 and shows a decrease of 629 in the number decided by District and Additional Judges and of 314 in that decided by Subordinate Judges, as compared with the previous year. The number of appeals disposed of after contest (15,415) was 446 less than in 1921. Appeals disposed of.

The decrease in disposals was spread over 11 districts and was largest in Noakhali (2,188), followed by Chittagong (845), Midnapore (474) and Mymensingh (403).

On the other hand, there was a marked increase in Rajshahi (1,377).

118. The number of appeals pending at the close of the year was 15,046, and was less than that of 1921 by 5,312. Appeals pending.

The number of over one year old appeals fell from 7,046 to 3,754. The 24-Parganas was accountable for the largest number, *viz*, 793.

119. The results on the decision of the lower courts of the appeals decided during the year were as follows: In 9,916 cases or 50·8 per cent. of the whole, the judgment of the lower courts was affirmed; in 3,337 cases or 17·1 per cent., it was modified and in 2,922 cases or 15 per cent. it was reversed. Eight hundred and eighty-six or 4·5 per cent. were remanded, and 2,470 or 12·6 per cent. were either not prosecuted or dismissed for default. The results are more favourable to the lower courts than in the preceding year. Results of appeals.

General.

General.

120. There was a further decrease in the institutions of original suits and appeals in the subordinate courts, with the result that, notwithstanding a decrease in disposals, there was an appreciable reduction in the arrears. The number of year-old cases was greater in the original, and smaller in the appellate courts, than in the previous year. On the Appellate Side of the High Court the institutions were greater than in the previous year, but the disposals being still greater there was an appreciable reduction in the pending file.

Receipts and charges of the civil courts.

121. The receipts of the civil courts in Bengal and of the High Court amounted to Rs. 1,80,81,893 showing an increase of Rs. 21,73,816 and the charges to Rs. 87,82,557 showing an increase of Rs. 7,32,526 on those of 1921. Including the amount realised on account of duty on probates, etc., the profit to Government from civil litigation amounted to Rs. 92,99,336 and excluding this item, it amounted to Rs. 75,59,278. Details of the receipts and charges are as follows:—

RECEIPTS.

		Rs.
In stamps	Process fees	30,14,484
	Other fees	1,41,20,834
In cash or special stamps.	Other receipts	3,61,038
	Copying and comparing fees	5,61,958
	Fines	3,579
	Total	1,80,81,893

CHARGES.

Salaries of judicial officers		32,95,782
Establishment	Process servers	12,66,333
	Others	28,49,649
Copyists fees'		5,39,443
Contingencies and refunds		8,31,350
	Total	87,82,557

There was an increase in receipts under all heads except "fines" and "copying and comparing fees." Under the head "other fees" the increase amounted to more than Rs. 21,38,000. The increase in expenditure was under all heads, and was most marked under head "Establishment."

Civil Justice in the scheduled district of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

122. The total number of civil suits instituted during the year 1922 in the civil courts of the scheduled district of Chittagong Hill Tracts was 527, of which 525 were for money and moveable property. The total number of civil suits for disposal was 605. Of these 55 were contested and 81 were without trial. The number pending at the close of the year

being 56. The number of miscellaneous cases was 3,000. Of these 2,181 were decreed *ex parte* and 316 were pending at the close of the year. The total number of appeals from decrees was 65. Of these 64 were disposed of, including one case transferred to another province. The number of miscellaneous appeals was 25, of which 24 were disposed of. The number of applications for execution of decrees was 1,092, of which 155 were pending at the close of the year.

Jails.

[The report on the Administration of the Jails Department in the Presidency of Bengal for the year 1922.]

Jail population.

123. The total number of prisoners admitted in the jails in this Presidency during the year was 84,985 or 1,619 more than in 1921, and the daily average number was 15,219·98 against 14,660·83 in the previous year. The increase was due to the admission of a large number of prisoners who had been convicted of offences in connection with the non-co-operation movement. This was the outstanding feature of the year. Endeavours were made by the non-co-operators to overwhelm Government by the number of people who were prepared to break the law and court imprisonment. Steps had, therefore, to be taken to construct or open temporary additional jails to cope with the situation. On the 1st January 1922 the number of such prisoners stood at 3,617. Only the temporary jail which had been opened at Kidderpore at the end of the previous year was actually required, though one was constructed at Kanchrapara, and the European Ward of the Mental Hospital at Berhampore was temporarily converted into a special jail for female prisoners in case of conviction. By the 30th December the numbers had fallen to 162. This was due not only to the expiry of the active phase of the movement and of sentences in the ordinary course, but also to the clemency of Government in the remission of sentences. The temporary jail at Kanchrapara has been abolished.

Classification of political prisoners.

124. At first, owing to the large influx into the jails of better class non-co-operation prisoners, temporary rules were issued creating a special class for prisoners possessing a better education and higher social status and with a higher standard of living than the ordinary convict without regard to their character or the character of their offence. This classification, was, however, too wide. Subsequently, these rules were superseded by revised rules prescribing differential treatment for a more restricted class of prisoners certified by Government to be special class prisoners on account not only of their status and education but also of their character and the character of their offence. The district jail at Berhampore has now been set aside for the accommodation of such prisoners.

Political Prisoners and Jail Administration.

125. The contact of these prisoners with ordinary convicts which, owing to their numbers, it was impossible to avoid, and the differential treatment accorded to them resulted inside the jails in a general deterioration of the standard of discipline amongst the ordinary convicts. Outside the jails their imprisonment aroused an unusual amount of public

interest. Many garbled and unwarranted accounts of alleged harsh treatment towards non-co-operation prisoners that were published in newspapers excited undue sympathy which reflected itself inside the jails in an attempt to upset discipline and to make the administration of the jails impossible. Two other effects must be noted of the presence of these non-co-operation prisoners. The first is that the disorganisation caused by such a large influx affected the earnings from jail industries adversely; whilst the second is that apart from the extra expenditure on buildings, the major portion of the extra cost of guarding and maintaining prisoners, Rs. 3,49,462, over that of the previous year, was due to the special diet, clothing and bedding of special class prisoners. It is not out of place to remark in these days of retrenchment that the efforts of the non-co-operators resulted in an extra expenditure of public revenues during the year of roughly seven lakhs on the administration of jails.

Outbreaks in jails.

126. The spirit of insubordination among the dangerous characters confined in the Presidency Jail culminated in open mutiny on two occasions, once on the 26th April and again on the 1st October 1922. In the first, 9 convicts were killed and 49 injured. Of the Jail staff one warder died of injuries and thirty-six others, including the Superintendent, Jailer, and six Assistant Jailers were injured. The incidents of both the outbreaks have been dealt with in detail in Government resolutions Nos. 7420 R.J. and 589 T.R., dated 8th August and 26th October 1922, respectively.

Reforms.

During the year a certain amount of progress was made in giving effect to such of the recommendations of the Indian Jails Committee as could be adopted without any or much additional expense. Owing to the financial condition of the province many recommendations of the Committee have had to be accepted in principle only; and their practical materialisation has been left to better days. On the report of a special committee appointed to advise Government as to the religious needs of the different communities in jails, rules have, since the close of the year, been inserted in the Jail Code regarding the religious observances of Hindu and Muhammadan prisoners in jails in this Presidency and other minor matters connected therewith. Provision has also been made for granting holidays to Hindu and Muhammadan prisoners on the occasion of their principal religious festivals.

Overcrowding in jails.

127. Many jails were overcrowded temporarily. Closely connected with the necessity for additional accommodation is that of segregating first offenders and persons charged with petty offences from habituals and grave offenders both in the convict and under-trial wards, a necessity which has been strongly urged by the Jails Committee. The Committee have also recommended the desirability of concentrating prisoners by the construction of more central jails and the conversion of district jails into sub-jails. These questions are engaging the attention of the Governor in

Council, though in the present financial position of the Government of Bengal it is impossible to carry these proposals into effect to any great extent.

Juvenile offenders.

128. There was a further increase in the number of prisoners under 16 years, the number being 687 against 338 in 1921. The increase was mainly due to the effect of the non-co-operation movement on young persons. A scheme is under preparation for the establishment of a reformatory school and other industrial schools prescribed by the Bengal Childrens Act. The majority of juvenile offenders now in jails will, when the scheme matures, be treated in these schools. The Juvenile Jail continued to do useful work; and the introduction of the star class system shows a gradual diminution in the number of offences committed by the boys. The Calcutta Prisoners' Aid Society is the only institution of the kind which has assisted released boys by securing employment, etc., in its own workshops and other private firms and families.

Short sentences.

73·27 per cent. of the total number of convicts admitted during the year were under sentences not exceeding six months, and out of a total of 5,959 prisoners convicted of thefts 1,585 or above 26 per cent. had sentences not exceeding one month.

Jail offences.

129. The total number of offences dealt with in jails was 16,823 against 16,338, showing an increase of 485 offences only. Minor punishments inflicted were 13,229, inclusive of warning 3,902, and major punishments 3,555 against 12,374, 3,229 and 3,400 in 1921. Whipping was inflicted in 73 cases against 33 in 1921; 53 cases were in connection with the mutinies in the Presidency Jail.

System of accounts in jails.

130. The system of accounts in the Presidency, Alipore Central and Juvenile Jails have been examined by the representatives of Messrs. Price, Waterhouse and Company, Chartered Accountants, London, who have recommended a commercialised system of accounting under which a record of the actual times during which convicts are employed on the various industries would be maintained and the labour cost of running them more accurately credited to the jails. The matter is now under the consideration of Government.

Health and mortality of prisoners.

131. The sick-rate, 43·0 per mille, showed a satisfactory diminution as compared with the preceding four years. The death-rate, 18·7 per mille, though higher than in 1921, was below that of the preceding three years. There was a marked fall in the death-rate from pulmonary tuberculosis.

Registration.

[Triennial Report on the Administration of the Registration Department in Bengal for the three years ending 1922.]

Progress and statistics of 1922.

132. There were 415 offices open at the end of the year as against 417 at the end of 1921. The total number of registrations and the total income declined from 1,855,944 and Rs. 25,44,469, respectively, in 1921 to

1,760,042 and Rs. 24,77,556 in 1922; but the total expenditure increased from Rs. 15,87,100 in 1921 to Rs. 16,45,743 in 1922, chiefly on account of revision of pay of ministerial officers and menials.

A comparison of the figures for the triennium 1920—1922 with the previous triennial figures shows a decided increase in the work of the department. The number of offices rose from 408 to 415. Compulsory and optional registrations affecting immoveable property increased by 17·7 per cent. and 12·0 per cent., respectively. The total number of registrations was 5,702,434 as compared with 4,913,594 in the preceding triennium, showing an increase of 16·0 per cent. The receipts of the department during the past three years amounted to nearly Rs. 78 lakhs and the expenditure to nearly Rs. 44 lakhs, leaving a surplus of over 34 lakhs. As compared with the previous triennium, the receipts increased by 25·1 per cent., the expenditure by 32·5 per cent., and the surplus rose by 16·6 per cent.

Departmental District Registrars.

133. The Madras system of departmental District Registrars was introduced in May 1919 as an experimental measure in the districts of Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Chittagong, Midnapore and Murshidabad. The experiment, however, did not prove a success, and was discontinued in Mymensingh and Dinajpur in the years 1921 and 1922, respectively. Orders for its discontinuance in the remaining three districts issued after the close of the triennium.

Revision of pay.

134. The pay of practically the whole staff of the Registration Department was revised in the period under review. A final revision involving additional annual expenditure of Rs. 24,000 and based on the report of the McAlpin Committee took effect from the 1st July 1921.

The scheme for the revision of pay of the ministerial establishments of district headquarters and rural registration offices, which was sanctioned by the Secretary of State in October 1916 and was introduced partially in 1919, was given full effect to in 1920 at an additional expenditure of Rs. 1,38,000 per annum. Here, too, the relief afforded by increased pay proved inadequate on account of the abnormal rise in prices, and time-scale pay was sanctioned for the ministerial establishment of the Registration Department on the lines of the recommendations of the McAlpin Committee, with effect from the 1st January 1922, at an additional annual expenditure of Rs. 2,01,480. Time-scale pay was also introduced in the offices of the Registrar of Calcutta and the Inspector-General of Registration, Bengal, at an extra annual cost of Rs. 6,046 and Rs. 12,419, respectively.

The scheme for the revision of pay of registering officers, which included a measure of reorganisation, also materialised during this triennium, and effect was given to it from the 1st December 1922 at an estimated cost in 1922 of Rs. 48,000, the total annual cost of the scheme being estimated at Rs. 1,92,000. According to this scheme the monthly pay of a Sub-Registrar has now been fixed at Rs. 80—6—140—6—200—10—250, with efficiency bars at Rs. 140 and Rs. 200.

Working of the Marriage Act III of 1872.

135. Fifty-nine marriages were registered during the calendar year 1922 under the Marriage Act III of 1872 against 52 in 1921. Of these, 41 were registered in Calcutta, 7 in Dacca, 3 in Howrah, 2 each in Hooghly, Tippera and Chittagong, and 1 each in Burdwan and Mymensingh. There were 45 Marriage Registrars, including 28 *ex officio* Registrars, as against 44 in the previous year. Of the 45 Marriage Registrars only 14 registered marriages.

Working of the Muhammadan Marriage Registration Act and the Kazis Act.

136. Bengal Act I of 1876 (an Act for the Voluntary Registration of Muhammadan Marriages and Divorces) was in force in the whole of this Presidency. The number of offices at the end of the year 1922 was 324 against 314 at the end of the year 1921. The total number of ceremonies registered during the year was 74,467 against 69,168 in 1921, showing an increase of 7·6 per cent. The increase, which was confined to the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions, is believed to be due to the steps taken by the Inspector-General of Registration to popularise the Act. The total receipts of Muhammadan Registrars and Kazis, including gratuities, amounted to Rs. 1,46,880-1-7 during 1922 against Rs. 1,36,900-0-9 in the preceding year, showing an increase of 7·2 per cent.

Working of the Indian Companies Act, 1913 (VII of 1913), Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912, (V of 1912), and Societies Registration Act, 1860.

137. The number of companies limited by shares in operation in Bengal at the close of the year 1922-23 was 2,527 with a nominal capital of Rs. 3,36,30,81,564 and a paid up capital of Rs. 1,02,04,44,491 as compared with 2,393 companies with Rs. 3,17,21,90,164 nominal and Rs. 91,26,76,379 paid up capital at the end of the preceding year. The number of new companies registered during the year was 203 as against 313 in the year 1921-22. Of these, 180 were limited by shares and 4 by guarantee; and 19 representing various social and philanthropic objects were registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860). The largest number of companies was, as usual, registered under the head "Trading and Manufacturing," "Banking and Loan" companies coming next. Five hundred and seventy-eight companies increased, while 46 reduced their capital, the corresponding figures of the year 1921-22 being 540 and 10. Forty-five companies, against 42 in the previous year, ceased to work, went into liquidation, were finally dissolved or otherwise became defunct during the year under review. The net receipts of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies from all sources aggregated Rs. 81,238-6-0 against Rs. 1,06,157-2-0 in the previous year. The decrease is attributed to the smaller number of new companies registered during the year under report. During the year no new auditor's certificate was granted under section 144 of the Companies Act, but a renewed certificate was granted to a temporary certificate-holder who had allowed his certificate to lapse. The register of auditors at the close of the year 1922-23 showed that 12 auditors certified by this Government were entitled to audit companies, accounts throughout British India, while the operations of 26 such certificate-holders were restricted to this Presidency. There were 18 prosecutions under the Indian Companies Act during the year, of which 15 ended in convictions and 3 were withdrawn.

Nothing of importance was reported during the year as regards the working of the Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912 (V of 1912). There were five such societies in Bengal during 1922-23, as against two in the previous year.

Municipal and Local Self-Government Departments.

MUNICIPALITIES OUTSIDE CALCUTTA.

[Reports from the Commissioners of Divisions on the Working of Municipalities in the Bengal Presidency (except Calcutta) during the year 1922-23.]

Number of municipalities.

138. The number of municipalities rose from 116 to 117 owing to the establishment of a municipality at Rajbari in the district of Faridpur.

Elections.

139. General elections were held in 21 municipalities which were, generally speaking, well contested as is evidenced by the larger number of civil suits and objections in connection with them. Excitement was so great at Hooghly-Chinsura for the election in Ward No. V that the crowd became unmanageable and the election meeting broke up in confusion and a fresh election had to be held on a postponed date. At Comilla there were objections before the District Magistrate against all the elections, but all were rejected after hearing. At Asansol, where the election system was first introduced during the year under report, all the seats were keenly contested. The evils of interference by the civil courts in the case of municipal elections are becoming more and more manifest with the increasing number of civil suits. In the civil suit in connection with the Dacca Municipality, referred to last year, the court issued a perpetual injunction restraining the elected candidate from sitting on the Board. An appeal has been filed and is still pending. In the case of the Maniktala Municipality fresh elections in Wards II and III could not be held during the year under report, as an appeal is still pending before the High Court against the decision of the Session Judge confirming the decree of the Lower Court, setting aside the elections held in 1919-20. Whatever the final result of the appeal may be, it will not be of much practical value as the life of the Board will expire on the 1st April 1924, and during the major portion of it, if not the whole, the two wards will have gone unrepresented. The ballot system has worked satisfactorily everywhere with the solitary exception of Nabadwip, where the Chairman was roundly accused of gerrymandering and has since resigned.

Ratepayers and voters.

140. The total number of ratepayers was 328,789 against 327,239 in the preceding year, the percentage of the ratepayers to total population being 15·08.

Assessment and taxation.

141. The incidence of taxation shows a steady increase. It was Rs. 2-11-7 in the year 1920-21, Rs. 2-12-2 in 1921-22 and Rs. 2-14-0 during the year under review. It is gratifying to find that the incidence of income shows the same upward tendency, the figures being Rs. 3-7-8 during 1920-21, Rs. 3-9-0 during 1921-22 and Rs. 3-11-7 during the year under report.

Collections.

142. There was a satisfactory increase of Rs. 3¾ lakhs in collections, the percentage on the current demand rising from 94·3 to 95·2. In 35 municipalities the collections were equal to, or in excess of, the current demand, and in 12 they were over 99 per cent. On the other hand, the ratio was under 85 per cent. in 10 municipalities, falling as low as 72 per cent. in Naihati.

In the Presidency as a whole the balance outstanding at the close of the year amounted to Rs. 9,88,037 against Rs. 8½ lakhs in the previous year and Rs. 7,06,896 in the year 1920-21. Howrah shows the largest balance outstanding, viz., Rs. 4,03,903. Other municipalities which had unduly large outstandings were Cossipore-Chitpur, Tollygunge, Budge-Budge, Hooghly, Mymensingh, Dacca, Barisal, Narayanganj and Chittagong. In many cases no satisfactory explanations have been furnished, but it seems the real explanation is what is stated by the Commissioner of the Presidency Division, viz.: "Few of the municipalities comply with the provisions of their own account rules about the method of the realisation of taxes. Generally warrants are not promptly issued and warrant fees are remitted—a direct encouragement to a person to pay his rates long after they are due."

Income and expenditure.

143. The total receipts, included opening balances, fell from Rs. 1,14,79,564 to Rs. 1,12,83,825, the decrease under the heads "Opening Balances" and "Revenue Derived from Municipal Property, etc.," counterbalancing the increase of no less than Rs. 3 lakhs in receipts from taxation. Expenditure rose from Rs. 92,95,041 to Rs. 94,44,329, the largest increase being under the head "Advances and Deposits."

Closing balances.

144. The year closed with an aggregate balance of Rs. 18,39,496 as compared with Rs. 21,84,523 in 1921-22. About one-third of the municipalities closed the year with balances exceeding one quarter of the total expenditure. On the other hand a number of municipalities failed to keep adequate working balances and in several cases they were insufficient to meet outstanding liabilities.

Education.

145. The amount spent on education including the Government grant of Rs. 88,708 was Rs. 3,56,200 or about 4·4 per cent. of the municipal income as against 4·3 per cent. in the preceding year. The expenditure incurred by all municipalities on primary education showed an increase of over Rs. 20,000. Seventeen municipalities, however, or one in seven failed to spend 3·2 per cent. of their ordinary income—the percentage which is taken to represent the amount required for the education of half the number of boys of primary school-going age. On the other hand the percentage was over 5 per cent. in 45 municipalities and over 10 per cent. in 12. None of the municipalities, for which a scheme for improvement and expansion of primary education was drawn up by Mr. E. E. Biss, could make any appreciable progress towards its execution except the South Suburban Municipality which started two primary schools in March 1922, and the Kanchrapara Municipality which took steps for

acquiring land for the proposed schools. The Cossipore-Chitpur Municipality could not spend the Government grant of Rs. 20,000 for its scheme as the proposal for acquisition of land did not advance.

Water-supply.

146. The provision of a pure water-supply is one of the greatest needs of Bengal towns, which, however, are unable to bear the expense of constructing water-works without large grants from Government. Of late years the amount which Government has been able to contribute has been curtailed by financial stringency, and the execution of many useful schemes has consequently had to be deferred. A grant of Rs. 50,000 was, however, made towards the Raniganj water-supply scheme and an equal amount was sanctioned to the Comilla Municipality, where a start was made with the much-needed water-supply scheme. The scheme for the improvement and extension of the Bankura water-works was sanctioned, Government agreeing to their one-third of the cost. No material progress could be made with the water-supply schemes of the Faridpur and Bally Municipalities for want of funds, and the proposed improvements to the Chittagong water-works had to be postponed for the same reasons.

147. As usual the suburban municipalities of Cossipore-Chitpur Maniktala, Tollygunge, South Suburban and Garden Reach were supplied with water from the Calcutta mains, while several other municipalities in the Presidency Division got their supply from the local mill filters. The Berhampore water-works was in a deplorable condition; it was in need of many urgent improvements, while the water-rate fund had heavy liabilities to clear up. The inability of the Municipal Commissioners to make these improvements out of their increased revenue derived from the revision of assessment was brought to the notice of Government and a special grant of Rs. 10,000 was made from provincial revenues after the close of the year on condition that the municipality should take a loan of the same amount to clear the liabilities, and temporarily transfer the management of the water-works to the Public Health Department of Government. It is observed in this connection that although the mufassal municipalities are realizing the possibility of undertaking water-supply schemes of a cheaper type based on artesian borings or tube wells, more experience is needed before they can be carried out in all areas.

Conservancy.

148. The total conservancy charges during the year were Rs. 21 lakhs, which was about Rs. 5 lakhs in excess of the receipt from latrine fees.

The sewerage scheme for Dacca was in progress and that for Tittagarh Municipality was sanctioned after the close of the year.

Audit of accounts and embezzlements.

149. The accounts of almost all municipalities except Gobardanga were audited during the year. Embezzlements or misappropriation of municipal money occurred in Bankura, Hooghly-Chinsura, Maniktala and Baraset. The amounts misappropriated, which are not reported in all cases, were, however, realized from the culprits and the officers concerned were dismissed. The long-standing question of embezzlement of hackney carriage fees of the Rajshahi Municipality which dates back to 1919, came

to a final decision after the close of the year, by the dismissal of the hackney carriage inspector and the transfer of the officiating tax daroga to a less responsible post.

The municipal authorities of Comilla took prompt and suitable action in remedying the defects and irregularities pointed out by the Examiner of Local Accounts. At the same time it must be admitted that generally little attention is paid to audit reports which are intended for the assistance of the local authorities and for bringing to light of defects and irregularities with a view to their remedy.

General remarks—Burdwan Division—Howrah.

150. The total ordinary income of the municipality fell from Rs. 15,99,554 to Rs. 15,92,551. The decrease is mainly attributed to the fall of receipt under the Fire Brigade Act and to the non-receipt of any contribution from the public for any improvement work. Expenditure rose from Rs. 12,62,192 to Rs. 14,00,146 mainly on account of increased outlay under the heads "Water-supply," "Roads" and "Conservancy." There was a revision of assessment in Wards IV and VIII. The current demand on account of municipal taxes rose from Rs. 14,91,245 to Rs. 16,70,330. The financial position of the municipality has improved within recent years.

The duties of cleansing the roads, drains and privies in the town was, as before, vested in the Ward Committees. Both the Chairman and the Commissioner of the Division complain of their inadequate supervision and of want of sympathy and co-ordination with the central municipal authorities. The question of the disposal of street sweepings is getting more acute year by year owing to the difficulty in finding dumping grounds. The road-watering arrangement of the town has been greatly improved; in addition to 21 road-watering carts, two road-watering lorries were purchased.

The expenditure under "Public Instruction" shows a slight falling off. The scheme prepared by Mr. Biss for the advancement and extension of primary education could not be taken up as it involved the imposition of additional taxation. The Municipal Commissioners, however, decided to take up four of the existing primary schools and to make education free in them.

The health of the town has improved during the last three years; the birth-rate is steadily increasing, the figures for the last three years being 20·20, 22·06 and 25·48 per mille, while the number of deaths was gradually decreasing since 1920-21. There were no epidemic diseases during the year. To remove infantile mortality four qualified midwives were appointed under the supervision of the Health Officer.

Burdwan Division.

151. The municipality of Burdwan was administered with great efficiency. A scheme for replacing the worn-out engines and boilers at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,30,000 was taken up during the year and considerable progress made. Kalna was at one time notoriously unhealthy, but during the last 10 or 15 years it has improved in respect of malaria, though

typhoid and kala-azar have become prevalent. Dr. Muir of the Scottish Mission Hospital introduced a cure for kala-azar by antimony injection which is being continued by his successor (Dr. Farakar). The success obtained from this method of treatment has led to an influx of patients from other places, and it is to their advent the Municipal Commissioners attribute the spread of the disease among the permanent residents of the town. The crying need of the town of Katwa is filtered water, but the municipality is making no provision for a supply. The first elected Municipal Board of Asansol was formed and it is hoped that the affairs of this municipality will now rapidly improve. The finances of the Midnapore Municipality continued to be unsatisfactory. The water-works scheme of the municipality still remains incomplete. In Chandrakona dissension and party feeling prevented all useful work being done.

The District Magistrate of Hooghly is of opinion that the two largest municipalities, viz., the Hooghly-Chinsura and Serampore, are the worst managed. The finances of the former show some slight improvement, but the outstanding balance being still so high as Rs. 21,000, the improvement is purely nominal and is unaccompanied by better work in other departments of the municipality. For want of continuous supervision over the collecting staff, collections are neglected and allowed to accumulate. Other branches of administration also suffer and the people are growing dissatisfied with the present management of the municipality and an agitation is going on to partition the municipality. The Serampore Municipality was faced with bankruptcy which has been averted by the recent assessment which will add 25 per cent. to its income. Party faction was noticeable in Kotrung. Much improvement has been effected in the Banshberia Municipality by the construction of a mill in Ward I and by the clearance of jungle by another mill in Ward III. The general health and sanitation of Baidyabati has improved, but the municipality is notorious for party factions. The collections in Champdany were very satisfactory.

Presidency Division.

152. The most outstanding incident of the year has been the decision of the Bengal Legislative Council to include the whole of Cossipore-Chitpur, Maniktala, Garden Reach and small portions of Tollygunge and South Suburban in the Calcutta municipal area with effect from the 1st April 1924. There continue to be too many municipalities whose administration falls far below what it ought to be. Panihati, Tollygunge, Raipur, Basirhat, Jaynagar and Baduria are all bad, and there are some others which might easily be better than they are. Halisahar and Kanchrapara are not on good terms and action has been taken under section 66A of the Bengal Municipal Act to settle their disputes, while in Budge-Budge the jute mills and the municipal authorities are fighting over the assessment and there has been civil litigation which the municipality has lost. Markets remain in much the same condition as before. In places like Jaynagar the Municipal Commissioners decline to enforce any of the much-needed improvements because private interests will

thereby be affected and zamindars and others are not ashamed to derive income from markets which are insanitary. The scheme for a railway market at Kanchrapara still hangs fire and no progress has been made with the project for a municipal market in Bhatpara. No great progress appears anywhere in jungle-cutting or filling up insanitary *dobas* and there is a general want of civic co-operation. Ratepayers do not keep their own holdings clear.

The municipal administration in the district of Murshidabad was fairly managed as far as municipal funds permitted and the health of municipal towns was generally good. The relation between the executive and the general body of Commissioners in the Berhampore Municipality was quite friendly with a healthy opposition. The Commissioners of the municipality managed fairly well in the matter of reassessment and with the increase of income the municipality expects to be able to restore the number of lights stopped, to take up road-watering which is badly needed, and to make somewhat more satisfactory arrangements about other items. The municipality finds the water-works a heavy financial burden. The standards of collection in the Khulna Municipality were again high, and freedom from epidemic disease enjoyed by the town was attributable to good administration. The work of the miniature municipality at Debhata was disgracefully bad. When the District Magistrate inspected it on the 23rd March 1923, it had carried out only three-eighths of the budgeted expenditure, had spent only one rupee out of a budgeted capital outlay on drains of Rs. 100 and had been without a sweeper throughout January and February. Its standards, traditionally low, were further depressed during the year by local class feuds. A general election was set aside, and a second was held resulting in the unseating of the *bhadralog* class.

The Commissioner of the Division observes:—"The few good municipalities do excellent work considering the very limited means at their disposal, but there are a large number which have in no way fulfilled the hopes of their founders. In many places the Commissioners have yet to learn the great responsibility involved by their position not only in spending carefully the money for the ratepayers but also in realizing their dues promptly and even honestly. There can be no merit in being kind at the expense of the municipal funds, in not exacting all money due at the proper date.

153. The state of affairs in the Dacca Municipality is bad. The latrine service is indifferent, the water-supply is deficient, and the condition of the roads leaves much to be desired. The revaluation was long overdue and the successive bodies of Commissioners who omitted to have the town revalued are partly to blame for the present discomforts of the ratepayers. The present Commissioners have at last made a general revaluation. In this connection the Divisional Commissioner observes as follows:—"The Municipal Commissioners of Dacca are to be congratulated on reducing the outstanding balance of taxes from Rs. 51,524 to Rs. 24,010 and are at Dacca Division.

last making a general revaluation. The increased assessment which has resulted from the large rise in the value of house property has not unnaturally caused a good deal of grumbling, and it is a pity that the revaluation was so long delayed, as, if it had been made at the usual intervals, not only would enhancement have been less sudden, but the Municipal Commissioners would have had more money with which to meet the growing needs of the town. There is an insistent demand for improved services of every kind, but the Chairman has shown that without more money not only will it be impossible to meet it, but it will be impossible even to maintain the existing services at their present level of efficiency. Already the maintenance of roads is being starved, and the Municipal Commissioners have had, for lack of funds, to decline a generous offer by Government in aid of female education. It is to be hoped that the ratepayers will in their own interests withdraw their opposition to a most necessary measure, which should have been taken years ago."

The Municipal Commissioners of Narayanganj had to curtail expenditure and to take stringent measures against defaulters in order to extricate the municipality from the financial morass into which their predecessors had plunged it. Some improvement of the financial position has also been effected in Faridpur and Barisal, though collections in the latter town are still unsatisfactory. But Mymensingh has gone from bad to worse. The outstanding taxes have increased from Rs. 30,255 to Rs. 39,109 and unpaid bills from Rs. 19,325 to Rs. 33,778, whilst the closing balance has fallen from Rs. 29,212 to Rs. 16,895. The water-works plant is being subjected to a dangerous strain whilst, owing to the waste of water through unmetered house connections, the bulk of the ratepayers are getting an inadequate supply. Of the rural municipalities, Muktagacha still has unpaid bills to the amount of nearly half of its current demand, whilst Nalchiti managed to collect its whole demand. Municipal affairs in Sherpur are not likely to be administered smoothly or satisfactorily until the municipality ceases to be used as a tool to further the rivalries of the zamindars.

Chittagong Division.

154. The Cox's Bazar Municipality had to face a cyclone in April 1922, and in spite of its limited income it still appears to be doing satisfactory work. In Chittagong the financial condition of the municipality is unsatisfactory. The new Board have been doing their best to improve the state of things. The income of the Comilla Municipality increased by about Rs. 2,000 by partial revision of assessment, and expenditure was reduced in some departments without impairing efficiency. Noakhali was still under erosion by the river. A new road was constructed in the extended area of Sonapur where some temporary quarters had been erected for officers; some roads in the interior of the town were raised for protecting the locality from flood-water.

Rajshahi Division.

155. The Darjeeling Municipality has maintained its reputation as a progressive municipality run on modern lines. The new municipal executive of the Rajshahi Municipality has shown commendable energy in tackling the problem left by the old Board. Most of the other municipalities

have carried on their routine duties fairly well, but cannot hope to show really satisfactory results until they materially increase their income. The incidence of taxation in most of them is at present painfully low.

Calcutta Corporation.

[Report on the Administration of the Calcutta Municipality for the year 1921-22.]

Introductory.

156. The Report on the Administration of the Calcutta Municipality for the year 1922-23 had not been received at the time of going to press, The following review relates to the working of the Corporation for the year 1921-22.

157. The year was rendered notable by the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who was presented with an address of welcome by the Corporation on his arrival in Calcutta on 24th December 1921.

Public Health.

158. The public health of the City showed a marked improvement. The rate of mortality dropped from 39·3 to 33·4 per thousand and the birth rate increased from 17·1 to 19·0 per mille. Partly as the result of improved registration of births and partly owing to a decrease in the number of deaths, the recorded rate of infantile mortality decreased from 386 to 330 per 1,000 births. There was an appreciable diminution of the mortality from various diseases. But kala-azar is becoming increasingly prevalent in the City, and tuberculosis was responsible for 2,208 deaths as compared with 2,120 in the previous year. The Corporation Lady Health Visitors and midwives continued to render very useful service.

Revenue Funds.

159. The opening balance of the Revenue Funds was Rs. 46 lakhs. The receipts amounted to nearly Rs. 1,59 lakhs and the payments to Rs. 1,72 lakhs, leaving a closing balance of about Rs. 33 lakhs. Of the total revenue of the Corporation 67·9 per cent. was derived from the consolidated rate. Twenty-six per cent. of the revenue was absorbed by charges on account of establishment.

Loan Liability.

160. The total debt outstanding at the close of the year was Rs. 5,35,73,200. The liability for interest and sinking fund charges amounted to Rs. 37 lakhs as against Rs. 35 lakhs in the previous year.

Assessment Department.

161. The annual valuation of the City at the end of the year was Rs. 611 lakhs as compared with 561 lakhs at the end of the previous year, showing a nett increase of Rs. 50 lakhs. The general revision of assessment yielded an increase of Rs. 33 lakhs and intermediate valuations, on account of additions and alterations, Rs. 17 lakhs.

Collection Department.

162. The total gross demand of the year was Rs. 1,12,73,795. Eliminating the amount remitted on account of vacancy, the nett demand stood at Rs. 1,09½ lakhs, of which Rs. 1,08 lakhs was collected and Rs. 1,068 remitted as irrecoverable. The balance outstanding at the end of the year was Rs. 1½ lakhs.

Bustee Department.

163. The condition of bustees in Calcutta leaves much room for improvement. Even the bustees which have been improved as the result of action taken under the Municipal Act, very soon lapse into their original state and are not very much better than the bustees on which no action has been taken. In 17 cases the required improvements were completed and in 94 holdings the works were in progress. About 22½ bighas of bustee land were cleared of huts, and a mile and a half of new roads and passages were opened out and 39 connected privies and 3 bathing platforms were constructed. Forty-three private streets were improved.

Water-supply.

164. The supply of both filtered and unfiltered water is at present seriously deficient and the question of improving the supply was under the consideration of the Corporation for some time past. After much deliberation the Corporation have adopted a scheme which will involve an expenditure of Rs. 2¼ crores. The scheme provides for an increase in the daily supply of 70 million gallons of filtered and 40 million gallons of unfiltered water with adequate control of the filtered water so as to provide a continuous supply at a minimum terminal pressure of 40 feet. The additional supply will not, however, be available for five years. The average quantity of water supplied daily during the year amounted to 37¼ million gallons of filtered and 31¾ million gallons of unfiltered water, being an increase of 259,000 gallons of filtered and 824,000 gallons of unfiltered water over the previous year's supply. The daily average consumption per head within the municipal area was 39·7 and 35 gallons respectively.

Drainage.

165. The question of the drainage of Calcutta is also a matter of grave concern. The town sewers were built many years ago and there are heavy accumulations of silt therein. After every heavy rainfall the town is flooded and the sewers take a long time to discharge the water. The Bidyadhari river also is in imminent danger of being silted up. Experiments have lately been made for dredging the river at a very heavy cost to which both Government and the Corporation contributed. But as the experiment is believed to have not been successful, Government contemplate further experiment at a still heavier cost by enlarging the spill area.

The principal drainage works in the course of execution during the year were the sewering of the area west of Kidderpore Docks, the drainage of the Chetla Rice Mill area, including the construction of a pumping station, the construction of the storm-water relief sewer in Bhowanipore, and the main outfall sewer in connection with the Improvement Trust's scheme for sewering the area to the south of Hazra Road, and the scheme for the drainage of the storm-water in portions of Wards Nos. 23, 24 and 25 between Tolly's Nullah and the Kidderpore Docks.

Lighting.

166. The efficiency of street lighting was generally maintained throughout the year. On the day of the *hartal* on the 17th November 1921, the lamp-lighters stopped work, but arrangements were made to have about one-third of the total number of lamps lighted. There was

again similar difficulty on the 24th December, when the labour staff of the Lighting Department and of the Oriental Gas Company stopped work. The Gas Company were nevertheless able to maintain a partial supply of gas, and about half the number of lamps were lighted with the help chiefly of the Calcutta Civil Guards.

Roads.

167. The total expenditure on account of road repairs amounted to Rs. 9,61,000 as compared with Rs. 6,32,000 and Rs. 9,53,000 in the two preceding years. The condition of roads leaves much to be desired. The narrow lanes and passages in the interior of the town particularly require attention.

Conservancy.

168. The principal development during the year in connection with conservancy was the introduction of motor traction for the removal of refuse as a working system. The total expenditure on account of street cleansing, the incinerator, and the Municipal Railway amounted to Rs. 22,98,000 as against Rs. 16,68,000, the increase being due to the purchase and working of motor lorries, increased cost of labour, and heavier expenditure on rails, sleepers and the rolling stock of the Municipal Railway which must be kept in a serviceable condition until it can be abolished.

Markets.

169. The total receipts from the four municipal markets, Sir Steuart Hogg Market, College Street Market, Lansdowne Market and Sir Charles Allen Market, amounted to Rs. 9,02,891 as against Rs. 8,98,172 in the previous year. Notices were issued during the year for improvements and for the removal of encroachments in private markets.

Food Inspection.

170. A special Inspector employed for the examination of *ghee* collected 732 samples, of which only 22 were found adulterated. The total number of samples of foodstuffs of all kinds taken by the Food Inspectors and analysed during the year was 5,383. Out of 1,500 samples of *ghee*, 1,040 of milk, 752 of sweetmeats, 685 of mustard oil and 219 of butter, 68, 275, 61, 170 and 2, respectively, were found adulterated. The total number of prosecutions instituted during the year was 1,833 as against 1,460 in the previous year, and the fines imposed amounted to Rs. 20,974. The work of examining foodstuffs arriving at the Howrah railway station was continued, and a joint conference of representatives of the Corporation and the Howrah Municipality is sitting to improve the existing arrangements for inspection and to obviate possibilities of friction. Proposals were also under consideration for reorganising the arrangements and system of work in connection with the inspection of foodstuffs in the City.

Hospitals and Dispensaries.

171. The number of patients treated at the Kidderpore Dispensary and the Ram Chandra Goenka Hospital and Dispensary at Kalighat, the Chetla Dispensary and the Pulta Dispensary was over 150,000. The amount of aid given to hospitals, dispensaries, almshouses and charitable institutions was Rs. 2,10,020 as compared with Rs. 1,95,575 in the previous year.

Education.

172. The total grants to primary and technical schools amounted to Rs. 1,07,724 as against Rs. 99,337 in the previous year.

Municipal Magistrates' Courts.

173. Including cases pending from the previous year, there were altogether 16,504 cases for disposal, of which 2,276 cases were withdrawn or struck off before the appearance of the accused and 29 cases were pending at the close of the year. The total amount of fines imposed was Rs. 89,565.

Calcutta Improvement Trust.

[Report on the Operations of the Calcutta Improvement Trust for 1922-23.]

Improvement schemes.

174. Four improvement schemes, including one in Burrabazar, were sanctioned. The publication of a land acquisition declaration in respect of Burrabazar was postponed pending the selection of a site for the new Howrah Bridge. The question of the removal of the Mint and the improvement of Strand Bank lands which are also connected with the improvement of Burrabazar is still under consideration. Five improvement schemes, excluding the reconstruction of a portion of an old improvement scheme, were completed. Eight, including the Shambazar Park, the Central Avenue to the south of Bowbazar Street and the Main Sewer Road—Chetla to Ballyganj—are in progress.

Open spaces.

175. Engineering works in connection with a small park at Ratan Sarkar Garden Street were completed. Tank filling and levelling work was started in the area acquired for a large park in Cossipore-Chitpur.

Rehousing schemes.

176. The blocks of workmen's dwellings originally erected in 1914 in the fringe area of Ward No. 4 are now fully occupied but not by persons actually dishoused by the operations of the Trust. The Board have therefore decided not to build any more workmen's dwellings for the present. Twenty-five bighas of land have been acquired and improved in Maniktola which may be let out in plots to persons wishing to build. The rehousing scheme in Kerbala Tank Lane was completed. Thirty-nine houses were built to be temporary let out at rents varying from Rs. 75 to Rs. 100 per mensem to dishoused persons while they were building new houses. As the houses failed to attract the class of people for whom they were intended, some of them were offered to the public. Road construction and drainage works in the rehousing scheme in Cossipore-Chitpur were nearly completed and tank filling and levelling work was in progress. When this scheme (comprising an area of 183 bighas) is completed, small building sites will be sold to displaced residential owners. Good progress was made in the erection of tenement houses at Bow Street for the Anglo-Indians displaced by the operations of the Trust.

Projected public streets.

177. In addition to three street alignments in Burrabazar one projected public street was sanctioned.

Finances.

178. The receipts from the terminal tax was slightly less than those of the preceding year, but the receipts from the duty on transfer of property which suddenly came down last year to about half of the income

derived during the preceding two years of exceptional land boom, increased by more than Rs. 1½ lakhs. The duty on jute which declined heavily on account of the slump in the jute trade last year showed a similar improvement. The total receipts under these three heads were nearly Rs. 20 lakhs against Rs. 16⅔ lakhs in the year 1921-22. The Calcutta Corporation contribution steadily increased to Rs. 12 lakhs; and a still further growth is expected on the amalgamation of Cossipore-Chitpur, Maniktola and Garden Reach with the Calcutta Municipality from the year 1924-25. Temporary lettings of undemolished buildings fetched rents amounting to Rs. 2¾ lakhs. Rupees 4⅘ lakhs and Rs. 26 lakhs were realised respectively from exemption fees and sale of lands and buildings. Rupees 118¼ lakhs and Rs. 28 lakhs were spent on land acquisition and engineering works, respectively. The expenditure on land acquisition was greater than that of any of the previous years. In order to meet the heavy expenditure the Trust floated, through the Imperial Bank of India, London, two 6 and 5½ per cent. sterling loans of £350,000 and £700,000 issued at 100½ and 93½ per cent., respectively. The total receipts from these two loans amounted to Rs. 157½ lakhs in addition to Rs. 17 lakhs which represented the balance of a previous loan.

The total income and expenditure under the Capital Account were Rs. 30⅖ and 150$_{1}^{1}_{6}$ lakhs, respectively. After meeting the deficit from the loans raised during the year, Rs. 54⅘ lakhs was transferred to the Revenue Account. The total income and expenditure under the latter account were, respectively, Rs. 40 and Rs. 24½ lakhs. Thus the Revenue Account (which opened with a balance of Rs. 41$_{1}^{1}_{6}$ lakhs) closed with a net balance of Rs. 111$_{5}$ lakhs.

District Boards.

[Reports of Commissioners of Divisions on the working of District Boards in Bengal during the year 1922-23.]

179. The provisions of the Bengal Local Self-Government Act were extended to the district of Darjeeling and a District Board was established there with effect from the 1st April 1922. Number of District and Local Boards.

180. The number of Local Boards rose from 75 to 82. The increase was due to the creation of three new Local Bards in the Darjeeling district, 2 in the Bogra district, and to the establishment of two more Local Boards, one at Jhargram by subdividing the Midnapore Sadar Local Board and the other at Lalbagh in the district of Murshidabad. The policy has, however, been not to establish new Local Boards pending a careful definition of the functions of the three rural authorities, viz., the District Board, Local Board and Union Board, and a proposal for the establishment of a Local Board at Bolpur, in the district of Birbhum, was negatived.

181. Up to the end of the year over 2,000 Union Boards were sanctioned by Government, of which nearly 1,300 were in working order. The Village Self-Government.

sanction had to be withdrawn or kept in abeyance in the case of certain unions on account of the apathy and opposition of the people to these institutions. The influences which hampered the growth and development of Union Boards during the preceding year were considerably on the wane if not extinct altogether. In some unions there was opposition to the realisation of the union rates in the early part of the year and the pay of the chaukidars was greatly in arrears and tahsildars had to be appointed under section 54 of the Bengal Village Self-Government Act. But later matters began to improve and on the whole the year marked a distinct advance in the development of these self-governing institutions, which have already established themselves as an integral part of the system of local self-government. The Union Boards generally showed increased interest in their work, in spite of their limited resources. The need for the supply of pure drinking water received attention and quinine was distributed. The Union Boards also attended to drainage, dispensaries and other works of sanitation and some of them also made contribution to schools. Some evinced great interest in improving the village roads within their respective jurisdictions. It is also reported that there has been marked improvement in the service of processes issued by the civil and criminal courts through Union Boards. On the other hand, many Union Boards left considerable room for improvement. This was mainly due to the facts that the members lost interest as soon as they were elected or nominated, and in some cases party faction was rife and the Presidents were apt to favour one party against another. In the Dacca district village roads and some tanks and wells which had been transferred to Union Boards for maintenance had to be retransferred to the control of Local Boards, as the Union Boards failed to maintain them properly.

Finance of District Boards.

182. The receipts amounted to Rs. 127 lakhs against Rs. 116·5 lakhs in 1921-22, the increase being mainly due to greater receipts under Local Rates, Medical, Railways, Civil Works, and Debt heads. The disbursements, however, fell from Rs. 123 lakhs to Rs. 120 lakhs. The closing balance amounted to Rs. 36 lakhs (of which Rs. 23·3 lakhs were in cash) against Rs. 28·2 lakhs in 1921-22.

Taxation.

183. The incidence was 2 annas 7 pies a head, varying in different districts from 1 anna 6 pies to 8 annas 2 pies.

Education.

184. The expenditure rose from Rs. 28·4 lakhs to Rs. 29·3 lakhs, of which Government contributed Rs. 16·9 lakhs, while school fees yielded Rs. 4 lakhs. District Boards from their own funds contributed Rs. 11·3 lakhs.

185. The number of upper and lower primary schools increased from 39,688 to 40,152, of which 3,229 were entirely maintained by the Boards, while the rest received grants-in-aid. 9,572 of these institutions were girls' schools against 9,495 in 1921-22 and 9,142 in 1920-21.

186. Schemes for expansion of primary education on the lines suggested by Mr. Biss received attention of the Hooghly District Board, but only a small number of Union Boards is reported to have been in earnest in the matter by raising the required sum either by taxation or local contribution. In Birbhum Mr. Biss explained before a conference of presidents, vice-presidents and secretaries of Union Boards the usefulness, the necessity, and the probable expenditure on free primary education under his scheme. Several union schools under this scheme were established in the Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Rangpur districts, and three similar schools are reported to have been started in the Benadpur Union under the Noakhali District Board, while the Pabna District Board selected one union for the purpose of giving effect to the scheme, as an experimental measure. The scheme continued to work throughout the year in the Raruli, Bagerhat and Tala Union Boards in the Khulna district. The latter two Union Boards succeeded in raising an educational cess, while the former got an offer of an annual contribution of Rs. 500 from the local Educational Society. Two more Union Boards in the same district have applied for the introduction of the scheme within their jurisdictions. It is gratifying to find that the opposition at first offered to the scheme in some places subsequently subsided and that the people are realising its benefits.

187. The expenditure under these heads aggregated Rs. 15·25 lakhs against Rs. 13·7 lakhs of the preceding year. Medical relief was provided primarily through 344 dispensaries maintained by the Boards and 282 in receipt of grants-in-aid as against 322 and 249 in 1921-22. Twenty-two new dispensaries were established during the year. One Ayurvedic subsidized dispensary was opened at Sarankhola in the Khulna district and the Berhampore District Board continued its contribution towards a similar dispensary at Berhampore. The Ayurvedic dispensary at Jessore continued to do good work and it is reported that this system of treatment was more appreciated by the local people than the allopathic system. The Faridpur District Board maintained one homeopathic dispensary at Madhukhali. The scheme of subsidizing private practitioners and dispensaries with a view to helping them in getting established in unhealthy places where medical aid cannot easily be procured, received the attention of District Boards. In the Burdwan Division the year marks a new epoch in the establishment of new dispensaries at thana headquarters as also Union Board dispensaries. Public Health and Medical Relief.

188. Arrangements were made by almost all the District Boards to provide medical relief to the people in the interior of the districts during epidemics by engaging doctors who distributed medicines free, treated cases, and took measures to prevent the spread of cholera and small-pox and other infectious diseases. An outbreak of cholera in the Dinajpur district was checked by the use of anti-cholera vaccine. In several districts steps were taken to combat kala-azar and the District Board doctors received training in its treatment. In the flood-affected area in Rajshahi, thirty-six centres were opened to provide

medical and sanitary aid to the local people and sixty disinfectors were appointed, who medically disinfected all the wells and tanks in the affected areas. As a result of this no epidemic of any kind broke out after the flood.

189. The system of free vaccination was in force in several districts. In some, where vaccination was so long under the Civil Surgeon of the district, it was transferred to the District Boards. In Midnapore the vaccination work was carried on by a staff of vaccinators under the Health Officer, who reported the general attitude of the people towards vaccination to be not very satisfactory.

Veterinary.

190. Compared with the preceding year, the charges under this head increased by Rs. 14,000, excluding the expenditure incurred by the Darjeeling District Board. The public seem now to have a greater faith in the treatment and protective measures of veterinary assistants. Much depends on the power of these assistants to convince ignorant people of the advantage of scientific treatment. After the last flood cattle disease broke out in Rajshahi in an epidemic form all over the affected area, but measures were immediately taken to arrest the further progress of the disease. The Birbhum District Board, with its slender means, could not cope successfully with the large number of cattle epidemics that broke out in the district. It is gratifying to notice that some Union Boards in the district came forward to assist the District Board in this matter. The Hooghly District Board reconsidered their proposal for abolishing the posts of two of the veterinary assistants, but in view of their financial stringency they again resolved to abolish one of them.

Water supply.

191. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 5·33 lakhs against Rs. 5·14 lakhs in 1921-22, and of this amount Rs. 4·6 lakhs were spent on original works. The expenditure under this head was mainly incurred on sinking wells and excavating and clearing tanks. The Local Boards in the Khulna district have drawn up a revised scheme to remove the scarcity of drinking water and a sum of Rs. 40,000 has been taken as a loan from Government which will be distributed among the Local Boards for the purpose. The problem, however, of removing the scarcity of drinking water in the rural tracts of their district intersected by rivers and khals full of saline water remains unsolved. It is reported that in many places entirely inhabited by raiyats it is difficult to secure land for excavation of tanks as the raiyats have no proprietary rights in the land, and the zamindar, who is apathetic to the welfare of his tenants, refuses to make a gift of lands. The Chairman of the Faridpur District Board observes that reinforced concrete wells have been very successful in sandy soil, and the people of *char* lands are showing in a remarkable degree their willingness to carry the rings and sink them at their own cost, provided the Board can supply them the rings. The system of granting loans without interest to enable owners

of old insanitary tanks to re-excavate them has also been much appreciated by the people of this district. The same system has also been adopted by the Noakhali District Board. In Bakarganj a triennial programme covering the excavation of 46 new tanks has been drawn up and approved by the Board. It is satisfactory to note that Union Boards in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Hooghly carried out works for the improvement of water supply.

192. The actual closing balance rose from Rs. 17·1 lakhs to Rs. 23·3 lakhs. There was a heavy balance in the 24-Parganas (Rs. 3,53,890), Midnapore (Rs. 3,37,290), and Burdwan (Rs. 3,85,457). The heavy balance at the credit of the 24-Parganas District Board is attributed to the unspent balance under "Civil Works," non-payment of the interest of the Magrahat drainage loan, and the unspent balance of the Government contribution for the Jaboona drainage scheme, while those in Midnapore and Burdwan are partly due to increased income from cess and partly to less expenditure under "Civil Works." The large balance in Midnapore was also swollen by the Government contribution for education. In Mymensingh the balance rose unduly from Rs. 50,533 to Rs. 2,22,248. Closing Balance.

Marine Department.

(1) Annual Report of the Port Officer, Calcutta, 1922-23.
(2) Annual Report of the Shipping Offices in Bengal, 1922-23.
(3) Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, 1922-23.
(4) Administration Report of the Howrah Bridge, 1922-23.
(5) Administration Report of the Agent for Government Consignments, 1922-23.
(6) Annual Report of the Port Officer, Chittagong, 1922-23.
(7) Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Chittagong, 1922-23.
(8) Annual Report of the Bengal Steam Boiler Commission, 1922.
(9) Annual Report of the Bengal Smoke Nuisances Commission, 1922.

PORT OF CALCUTTA.

193. At the end of the year there were 64 pilots, including Leadsmen apprentices, on the list against the sanctioned strength of 74. There was no recruitment of Leadsmen during the year. The system of payment of a guaranteed minimum remuneration to the pilots was continued. In October 1922, a Committee was appointed by the Government of India to consider the reorganisation of the service. The deliberations of the Committee had not concluded when the year ended. Bengal Pilot Service.

194. The number of vessels piloted was 1,150 inwards with a gross tonnage of 5,562,606 and 1,172 outwards with a gross tonnage of 5,665,794 against 1,210 vessels inwards and 1,236 outwards with a gross tonnage of 5,703,641 and 5,813,635, respectively, for the previous year. No vessel was detained at the Sandheads for want of pilots as happened with 5 vessels in the preceding year. Vessels piloted.

Pilotage receipts.

195. The pilotage receipts amounted to Rs. 11,49,919 against Rs. 11,83,916 and Rs. 13,79,343 for the two preceding years.

Casualties to vessels.

196. Seventy-one preliminary enquiries were held to investigate casualties to both sea-going and inland vessels against 64 in the previous year. Two cases were referred to Special Courts of Enquiry and one to a Departmental Court.

Survey.

197. The total number of vessels surveyed during the year was 410 and the fees realised for the purpose amounted to Rs. 35,135.

SHIPPING OFFICES, CALCUTTA AND KIDDERPORE.

Finance.

198. The revenue of the Shipping Offices amounted to Rs. 1,23,919 and the expenditure to Rs. 1,03,258 against Rs. 1,16,104 and Rs. 87,471, respectively, for the previous year.

THE CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.

Finance.

199. Trade conditions, which have been generally unfavourable during the previous year, showed slight indications of improvement. The year started with a small balance on revenue account of Rs. 13,625.

The total income of the Port Trust during the year amounted to Rs. 264·75 lakhs as against Rs. 219·17 lakhs in the previous year. Some revision of charges which took effect from the 1st April 1922, gave, on a smaller tonnage, a total income from goods of Rs. 123·04 lakhs as against Rs. 108·33 lakhs in 1921-22. From vessels the figures were Rs. 48·56 lakhs as against Rs. 45·89 lakhs in 1921-22 and from railway earnings by enhanced terminal and freight charges Rs. 30·49 lakhs as against Rs. 19·76 lakhs for the previous year. The income from rentable lands and buildings increased from Rs. 37·52 lakhs in 1921-22 to Rs. 39·35 lakhs in the year under review.

The total expenditure of the Trust, including interest and Sinking Fund charges, amounted to Rs. 249·47 lakhs, resulting in a surplus of income over expenditure of Rs. 15·42 lakhs. Out of this surplus Rs. 12 lakhs were transferred to Revenue Reserve Fund, leaving Rs. 3·42 lakhs to be carried forward to 1923-24.

The total amount available for capital expenditure was Rs. 286·86 lakhs and the total expenditure amounted to Rs. 211·89 lakhs, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 74·97 lakhs.

Satisfactory progress was made in the construction of the King George's Docks, which was commenced about the end of the year 1919-20. The Docks will be one of the largest port engineering works in the world. The actual construction work consisted almost entirely of excavation and reclamation and the building and sinking of monoliths for the Entrance and Wet Docks Berths, which are to be completed by the financial year 1927-28.

HEALTH OF THE PORT OF CALCUTTA.

Inspection of Vessels.

200. The number of inward bound vessels inspected in the port was 887 and that of outward bound vessels 1,117, while the numbers of crew and passengers were:—

	Inward.	*Outward.*
Crew ..	83,296	102,785
Passengers ..	99,655	122,951

Health of Seamen—Europeans and Asiatics.

201. Thirteen deaths of European seamen were reported to have occurred in hospitals, while there were 202 cases of venereal disease.

The total number of deaths among the Asiatic population of the port was 122, of which 78 were from accident, one from heart failure and 37 from other causes.

Infectious Disease.

There was no serious outbreak of infectious disease. Several cases of small-pox, measles and cholera occurred and were promptly dealt with.

HEALTH OF THE PORT OF CHITTAGONG.

Inspection of Vessels.

202. The total number of ships inspected was 329 against 541 in the previous year and the numbers of crew and passengers were:—

	Inward.	*Outward.*
Crew ..	18,166	6,286
Passengers ..	66,984	11,358

Infectious Diseases.

Only a few cases of small-pox and cholera occurred. They were all removed to hospital and precautions taken.

HOWRAH BRIDGE.

203. The year under review opened with a deficit on Revenue Account of Rs. 2,88,463. The income and expenditure of the Bridge during the year amounted to Rs. 4,46,054 and Rs. 4,10,738 against Rs. 3,67,347 and Rs. 4,28,301, respectively, in the previous year.

The Bridge was opened during the year on 292 occasions, of which 37 were day openings and 255 night openings.

The total number of accidents during the year was 35 as compared with 21, 16, 37 and 35 in the preceding four years.

Towards the end of the year a Representative Committee was appointed to consider the question of financing the proposed new Howrah Bridge of the cantilever type. The Committee did not conclude its sittings before the end of the year.

AGENCY FOR GOVERNMENT CONSIGNMENTS.

204. The total receipts of the Agency for the year were Rs. 4,09,020 and the expenditure Rs. 4,23,891 against Rs. 4,59,462 and Rs. 4,66,608, respectively, in the previous year.

The tonnage dealt with was 29,923, including 253,363 packages. The total value of freight bills passed by the Agency was Rs. 2,58,106.

PORT OF CHITTAGONG.

Arrival and departure of vessels.

205. The number of arrivals during the year was 832, of which 255 were ocean-going steamers, 553 inland steamers and 24 Indian sailing vessels. The corresponding figures for out-going vessels were 827, 256, 555 and 16. The gross tonnage was 854,346 inwards and 853,570 outwards. In the previous year the number of arrivals was 813 with a total gross tonnage of 677,725, the number of departures being 814 with a total gross tonnage of 678,235.

Casualties to vessels.

206. Four preliminary enquiries were held during the year to investigate shipping casualties against 3 in the preceding year. No special court of enquiry was held.

Survey.

207. Eighty vessels were surveyed at the port of Chittagong during the year and the fees realized for the purpose amounted to Rs. 12,009.

CHITTAGONG SHIPPING OFFICE.

Finance.

208. The revenue of the Shipping Office amounted to Rs. 455 and the expenditure to Rs. 1,310 against Rs. 245 and 1,024, respectively, in the preceding year.

Seamen shipped and discharged.

The number of seamen of all nationalities shipped and discharged during the year was 250 and 241, respectively, against 160 and 209 in the previous year.

CHITTAGONG PORT TRUST.

209. The ordinary receipts of the Port Trust for the year amounted to Rs. 5,43,243, as against Rs. 4,61,452 of the previous year.

The ordinary expenditure of the Port Trust for the year amounted to Rs. 5,38,469 against Rs. 6,41,766 of the preceding year, the decrease being mainly due to restricted expenditure on all possible items, particularly on the Dredger *Karnafuli I.*

The value of the Port Commissioners' properties as estimated on 31st March 1923 stood at Rs. 5,85,121, and the liabilities, excluding loans taken from Government, amounted to Rs. 3,044.

The total value of foreign and coasting sea-borne trade was Rs. 981·53 lakhs, which showed an increase of Rs. 211·36 lakhs over that of the preceding year.

BENGAL STEAM BOILER COMMISSION.

Inspection of boilers.

210. The Report of the Boiler Commission covers the period from January to December 1922.

During the year under review the Commission held thirteen ordinary and three special meetings for the transaction of business. The special meetings were held to discuss the Boiler Laws Committee's report and to consider the draft regulations under the new Indian Boilers Act. The total number of boilers on the register for Calcutta and other places within the jurisdiction of the Commission was 6,987 against 6,584 in the previous year. Altogether 6,273 boilers were inspected. Two hundred and eight boilers were struck off the boiler registers, as they had not been presented for survey for over five consecutive years, or had been removed out of jurisdiction, or condemned as unfit for further service.

211. The total receipts and expenditure during the year were Rs. 1,75,806 and Rs. 1,50,405, respectively, as against Rs. 1,56,748 and Rs. 1,41,451 during the previous year. Receipts and expenditure.

BENGAL SMOKE NUISANCES COMMISSION.

212. The Commission held 12 meetings during the year for the transaction of their business. Meetings of the Commission.

213. The number of factories visited for instruction and test was 3,552 as against 3,122, and the number of observations of smoke emission taken was 9,856 against 8,254 during the previous year. Inspections and observations.

The average emission of smoke of the controlled grades has risen to 1·68 minute in the hour from 1·6 in the previous year and 1·22 in the year 1920, the lowest ever attained. The Commissioners are confident that had not the Smoke Nuisances Department been handicapped, owing to the inadequacy of the inspecting staff, the increase of controlled smoke during the years 1921 and 1922 would have been prevented.

Plans of 89 installations were examined, approved or rejected as compared with 41 in the previous year. In addition to this, the Commission also dealt with many references from owners outside the controlled area and from other provinces.

Approximately 9,100 horse power were connected to the high and low tension systems of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. The application of smokeless gas and electrical appliances plays no small part in the conservation of public health and property. General.

By the joint endeavours of the owners and the department, an apparatus for using paddy husk in furnaces as fuel was produced which materially reduces the amount of smoke emitted. About half the rice mills have been provided with this apparatus, and the department is endeavouring to induce the remaining owners to introduce it. The saving in the cost of fuel is so pronounced that the price of machine-cleaned rice should be appreciably diminished.

CHAPTER IV.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Agriculture.

[Report on the operations of the Department of Agriculture, Bengal, for the year 1922-23.]

Administration.

214. Mr. G. Evans held charge of the Department till the 16th October 1922, when he proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement, and Mr. R. S. Finlow officiated as Director for the rest of the year. During the year under report two new Deputy Directorships of Agriculture were sanctioned, bringing the total number to 5, *i.e.*, one for each of the five divisions of the Presidency. Mr. M. Carbery continued as Agricultural Chemist, and Messrs. G. P. Hector and D. Dutt as First and Second Botanists, respectively, throughout the year.

Agricultural Education.

215. Owing to the abolition of the Sabour Agricultural College, no new students were sent there during the closing session 1922-23. Out of the 19 students in the second year class 18 passed the final examination. There is at present no agricultural college for the united population of 90 millions in the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam. The necessity for the establishment of the proposed Agricultural Institute at Dacca has therefore become much more imperative. The number of students in the two Secondary Agricultural Schools at Dacca and Chinsura has diminished in the present year, partly owing to the enforcement of the condition that students must be directly connected with the land; but chiefly because, on account of retrenchment, no Government posts are available for the students who passed out at the end of last session. Agricultural classes attached to the Durgapur (Chittagong) and Amarpur (Burdwan) H. E. Schools and the Methodist Episcopal Church, Asansol, are reported to have done good work during the year, under the guidance and supervision of departmental officers.

Research and experiment. (a) Water hyacinth.

216. During the year under review Government had under consideration the report of the Committee appointed to devise ways and means for the eradication of water hyacinth, which has become a source of serious obstruction to navigation and a danger to crops. The Committee were not unanimous about the efficacy of the spray, demonstrations of which were given by its inventor, Mr. T. S. Griffith. Pending further investigation, the Committee recommended its destruction by fire as the only immediate means of ameliorating the situation and suggested legislation to ensure concerted action for destruction. Legislation has been attempted in Burma and has failed, and it is doubtful if it will succeed in Bengal. Though the hyacinth is making steady progress, extensive damage to crops does not so far appear to have taken place.

(b) Fibres.

217. The main work in the Fibre Section was, as usual, the evolution of improved races of jute, and the distribution of the seed of these to the cultivators. The demand for improved seed far exceeds the supply and, in January 1923, as much as 1,500 maunds (60 tons) was disposed of in

a fortnight. The spinning qualities of the fibre of departmental jute are being further investigated in collaboration with the Indian Jute Mills Association. Valuable results have been obtained from manurial experiments in collaboration with the Agricultural Chemist to the Government of Bengal and further progress has been made with work on the retting of jute, sunn-hemp and other fibres.

218. Paddy practically monopolized the attention of the First Economic Botanist to the Government of Bengal. In the variety tests at Dacca, *indrasail* appears to be without a rival and at Chinsura both *dudshar* and *indrasail* maintained their superiority over the local *nagra* and other races even in an unfavourable season. No new types of high land broadcast *aus* rice have yet been found to beat *kataktara*, which has throughout proved a very heavy yielder. The demand for such improved varieties is rapidly increasing. (c) Botany.

The Second Economic Botanist to the Government of Bengal was in charge of investigations into cotton, deep-water paddy, pulses and oilseeds. The discovery, in Eastern and Northern Bengal, of a type of cotton, which answers Roxburgh's description of the Dacca muslin cotton, has aroused considerable interest. A cotton survey of Bengal is in progress and there are roughly 60,000 acres of cotton in Bengal at present.

Experiments with pulses and oilseeds are making good progress in Berhampore, Rangpur and other farms. Investigations into deep-water paddy, *til*, *masuri*, *khesari* and peas are being undertaken with considerable success.

219. The long drought in April and May was in many ways disastrous to the sugarcane crop, but it showed the outstanding drought-resisting capacity, not only of *tanna*, the race at present accepted by the department for distribution to the cultivators, but also of two of the new hybrid races from the Government of India sugarcane breeding station at Coimbatore, Madras. It remains to be seen if the Coimbatore canes are capable of resisting disease like *tanna*. Several other new varieties have also been received from Demarara, Java, etc., for trial in the current year. The demand for setts of *tanna* canes continues undiminished. More than usually interesting results have been obtained in manurial experiments with sugarcane. Work on the date palm has been recommenced after a considerable interval. (d) Chemistry.

A comprehensive general investigation into tobacco is in progress. New kinds, such as Virginia, Manila and Havana are being tried as fillers for the Sumatra wrapper grown at Rangpur. Groundnut-cake and fish manure are both found to be good fertilizers for tobacco. The number of requests for analyses of soil, manures, etc., is rapidly increasing.

220. The Entomological Assistant has continued his work on mango weevil, and it is now satisfactorily established that the mango fly in Eastern Bengal can be largely avoided by keeping the ground near the trees clear of jungle and by bagging the fruit. (e) Entomology.

(f) Mycology.

221. The investigations of the Mycological Assistant into the fungus diseases of paddy, jute, sugarcane, barley, brinjal, areca palm, tobacco and cotton met with considerable success. He also worked on the budrot of the palmyra palm in the districts of Hooghly and Burdwan.

Cattle breeding.

222. There are at present two distinct lines of work at the Rangpur Cattle Farm. In one herd *desi* cows are being crossed by Hissar bulls with a view to creating a hybrid race; while in the other an attempt is being made to improve the *desi* herd from within. Steady progress has been made in both these directions towards the evolution of an animal which will be useful both for milk production and for draught purposes. Careful work is also being done with the object of amplifying the fodder supply of the province.

Retrenchment.

223. The Retrenchment Committee proposed a wholesale reduction of the propaganda staff of the department under an apparent misapprehension of some of the evidence placed before them. A modified acceptance of their recommendations has afforded an opportunity to return to the original policy of Government, which is that the expansion of the propaganda staff shall take place at the same rate as the establishment of district farms. The latter are regarded as the essential basis of agricultural activity in any tract. District farms are in future to be established at the rate of two in each year. Berhampore and Faridpur are to be completed in the current year and Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri in the year 1924-25.

Public interest in work of Agriculture Department.

224. There is a gratifying increase of public interest in the work of the Agricultural Department, and several agricultural associations, *i.e.*, in Birbhum, Bankura, Nadia, Pabna and Manikganj are now doing excellent work. Private farms are also being established and small co-operative farms are being tried in the Pabna district. Collaboration with the Co-operative Department shows every indication of yielding valuable results.

Floods in North Bengal.

225. To repair flood damage the Agricultural Department, collaborating with the respective Collectors and their staff, distributed on loan 4,000 maunds of *rabi* seeds in the districts of Rajshahi and Bogra. Attempts are being made to classify the sources of supply and to organise centres of distribution in anticipation of similar disasters in the future.

Sericulture.

226. Mr. P. C. Chaudhuri, Deputy Director of Sericulture, Bengal, assisted by two Superintendents, was in charge of seed cocoon production during the year. Miss Cleghorn also continued her work at Alipore. The total receipts from the nurseries amounted to Rs. 61,188-1-9 against Rs. 79,381 and the expenditure to Rs. 1,81,253-12-2 against Rs. 1,62,460 of the previous year. The falling off in receipts is attributed to the shortage in cocoon production resulting from abnormal weather conditions, such as drought, flood, etc., as well as to the heavy budget curtailment

which necessitated abandonment of a portion of the programme. Nevertheless, there was a marked advance in placing the work of this section on a sounder basis than before. It has now been definitely decided that under the present circumstances hybridisation should be abandoned as not likely to produce good results. Results of manurial experiments indicate that the yield of leaf is capable of a large increase. Formalin, which is at present used as a disinfectant, is being tentatively replaced by a substance called " E. C.," invented by Mr. Hutchinson, Imperial Bacteriologist, Pusa. " E. C." has been found to be far more powerful and also less costly than Formalin. The question of multiplication and distribution of disease-free seeds is still the main item in the policy of the Sericultural Department, and the encouragement of selected rearers to produce seeds under departmental supervision is so far shown to be sound. Steps have been taken to reconstitute the present Silk Committee by the inclusion of representatives of rearers and reelers. The two sericultural schools at Rajshahi and Berhampore and the primary schools attached to the Government Nurseries at Piasbari, Amriti, are reported to be making good progress.

Industries.

[Report of the Department of Industries, Bengal, for the year 1922.]

227. Dr. D. B. Meek held charge of the department for a small part of the year. He was on leave for about eight months and during his absence Mr. A. T. Weston, Deputy Director of Industries, acted as the Director of Industries, Bengal. **Administration.**

228. As a result of the appointment of an expert staff it was found possible to undertake some research work during the year, apart from that done at the Calcutta Research Tannery. Some fruitful experiments were carried out on various woods used in the match industry under the supervision of the Industrial Chemist. The Industrial Engineer, after several experiments, succeeded in devising a suitable hammer, which, as a labour- and time-saving appliance, will go a great way in assisting the brass and bell-metal industries of the province. Efforts were being made to design a labour-saving cutting instrument for the conch-shell industry. **Industrial research.**

229. Investigations into the commercial utility of the tanning materials in the Sundarbans and economic methods of their utilisation were continued. The investigation into the tanning properties of the sundri-bark and the manufacture of sole-leather from buffalo hides with *babul*, *goran* and myrabolans were completed. Considerable progress was made with the investigation into the use of Indian oils in the manufacture of fat-liquors. Experiments in regard to the manufacture of glace-kid by the double-bath process of chrome-tanning and the improvement of the quality of chrome upper leather or box-side, manufactured from Indian cow hides, were continued. **Calcutta Research Tannery.**

Surveys.

230. Mr. A. P. Ghose, a match manufacturing expert, carried out a survey of the technical and commercial aspects of the match industry in Bengal during the year under report. A survey of cottage industries, which is nearing completion, will, it is hoped, be a guide to the department in regard to future development.

Industrial development.

231. A scheme for the establishment of a cigar factory at Rangpur could not be given effect to owing to financial stringency. Steps were being taken for the improvement of the cutlery industry at Kanchannagar (Burdwan) and of the potters' industry at Rupnarainpur (Burdwan). A draft Bill for State Aid to Industry is under consideration, and is expected to be introduced in the Legislative Council in 1924. Demonstrations of improved methods of spinning, weaving and dyeing and also of tanning by the ordinary and special staffs continued to be a successful feature of the department's work. As a general result of tanning demonstrations the modern improved process of chrome-tanning has been adopted by many cottage tanners who were hitherto accustomed to vegetable tannage.

Technical and industrial education.

232. The number of technical schools shows an increase during the year. An effort is being made to encourage private technical schools to revise their prospectuses and, as far as possible, to teach up to the requirements of the London City and Guilds Institute. During the last few years many applications have been received from Bengal candidates to sit for the London Examinations and the percentage of passes, especially from some of the older institutions, has been satisfactory.

Government Weaving Institute, Serampore.

233. Including some pupils from Bihar and Orissa there were 141 pupils in the artisan classes during the year under report. Of these, 80 passed out and are, as far as is known, engaged in weaving on fly-shuttle looms. The popularity of the Institute is evidenced by the fact that 400 applications for admission to the higher classes from qualified candidates were received during the year. But, owing to lack of space, only 35 students could be admitted. Apart from lack of accommodation, difficulties arise from the scattered condition of the buildings, some of which are situated at a considerable distance from each other, which makes supervision difficult and results in loss of time.

Mensuration, Practical Mathematics and Machine Drawing were added to the curriculum of the first year class and towards the end of the year a weaving class for women was opened as an experimental measure, which affords instruction to the women in the higher as well as in the artisan classes of the Institute. The practical classes are conducted at the hostel rented by the Y.W.C.A. for the residence of the female students, of which Miss Wilson has charge. Twelve applications for admission were received, including two for the higher classes.

During the year Rs. 2,770 was advanced as loans to the ex-students of the Institute and of its outlying centres. This policy has proved

very successful and repayment has so far been regular. A carpenter and a mechanic were added to the staff and the total direct expenditure on the school and outlying centres was Rs. 82,766.

Other weaving schools.

234. The success achieved by the peripatetic weaving centres was very satisfactory and Government have sanctioned an increase of the number of students attending each centre at a time from five to ten. There were 235 students on the rolls in the district and peripatetic weaving schools on the 31st December 1922, and a similar number were passed out to spread the use of shuttle looms in the district. District weaving schools have been established at Tangail, Malda, Bankura, Pabna, Begumganj (Noakhali), Zorwarganj (Chittagong) and peripatetic schools are working in Tangail, Bankura, Nadia, Khulna, Dacca, Malda, Pabna and Birbhum. There is a growing demand for the supply of Dobby and Jacquard machines, especially in the districts where fine weaving is done.

Calcutta Technical School.

235. A sum of Rs. 71,000 was allotted for the construction of the building and erection of the compound walls of the school during the year. The ground floor of the building is approaching completion and a strong governing body of 14 members has been appointed.

Mainamati Survey School, Comilla.

236. About 80 candidates applied for admission to the first year class, and 34 were admitted, of whom three have passed the Intermediate Examination of the Calcutta University in Arts or Science and 28 were Matriculates. There were 22 admissions, including two Amin students from Rangpur, to the second year class. The total direct expenditure on the school was Rs. 16,394. For lack of funds the construction of permanent buildings had to be postponed.

Kanchrapara Technical School.

237. The technical school for the training of apprentices from the Eastern Bengal Railway was opened on the 1st February 1922. The selection of apprentices is made on the results of a test examination conducted by the Board of Control for apprenticeship training. Of the sanctioned staff of one Head Master, one first Assistant Master, one Second Assistant Master, one Workshop Instructor and one Mechanical Draughtsman, only the first Assistant Master was appointed during the year. The number of students on the roll is 21. Direct expenditure borne by Government was Rs. 4,750, in addition to Rs. 5,339 paid for furniture and equipment. The cost of maintenance is borne by the Bengal Government, who have also built a hostel for Indian apprentices, where at present the classes are being held. Anglo-Indian apprentices are accommodated at the hostels which were formerly built for them by the Eastern Bengal Railway. Stipends to apprentices, amounting to Rs. 52,636, were paid by the Railway. The school is managed by a local committee.

Mining Education Advisory Board.

238. The number of students attending the mining lecture centres at Raniganj, Jamuria and Deshargarh rose from 167 to 198. A course of elementary lectures in Bengali was delivered by a Special Instructor

at Kalipari, Toposi and Mugma. The appointment of a whole-time instructor has been sanctioned and the preparation of a manual of coal mining has been completed. Lecture halls required for the introduction of the improved scheme are under construction at Raniganj and Sitarampur.

Board of Control for Apprenticeship Training.

239. A number of tentative model schemes for practical training suitable to various types of workshops have been adopted by the Board. It is hoped to secure the co-operation of workshop authorities, so that practical training under commercial conditions may be combined with theoretical instruction. Out of 125 candidates who appeared at the admission examinations 73 were successful and 33 were accepted by firms co-operating with the Board.

Joint Technical Examination Board.

240. The overseer examination in the old course in Civil Engineering was held at two centres, viz., Dacca and Bankipur, in March and the lower subordinate examination at Sibpur also. The control of the Mechanical and Electrical Engineering classes at the Bengal Engineering College has been transferred from the Joint Technical Examination Board to the Board of Control for Apprenticeship Training. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 7,354. The examination fees collected from candidates amounted to Rs. 7,060.

City and Guilds Examination Committee.

241. Fifty-six candidates for examination in textile subjects sat for the annual technological examination of the City and Guilds London Institute at the Serampore Weaving Institute. Eighty-one candidates appeared in non-textile subjects at the Government Commercial Institute, Calcutta. Twenty-five out of 30 candidates were successful in special examinations in needlework and plain cookery held at Kurseong and Darjeeling. The cost of the examination was Rs. 1,116 and the fees collected Rs. 1,240.

Survey Education Advisory Board.

242. At the Amin examination 51 candidates passed out of 76. The cost of the examination was Rs. 858 and the fees collected Rs. 760. All the 13 candidates at the second year survey final examination of the Mainamati School were successful. The fees collected were Rs. 260 as against an expenditure of Rs. 226.

Grants-in-aid.

An annual grant of Rs. 10,000 has been sanctioned by Government for the Jamshedpur Technical Institute, provided that five vacancies are reserved for students from Bengal. Sixty non-Government Technical, Industrial and Commercial Schools are in receipt of grants-in-aid and the expenditure on them, including maintenance, building and equipment grants was Rs. 1,38,900.

Scholarships.

243. The expenditure on scholarships and stipends was Rs. 22,310. No State technical scholarship was awarded during the year.

General.

244. Many new proposals for the establishment and improvement of industrial and technical schools had to be postponed owing to financial stringency. The total number of institutions, public and private,

on the 31st December 1922, was 117 and that of pupils attending them was 5,899. The total expenditure on technical and industrial institutions during the year was Rs. 7,14,521 distributed as follows:—

1.	Provincial revenues	3,34,571
2.	District funds	81,498
3.	Municipal	11,464
4.	Fees	1,02,166
5.	Other private sources	1,84,822

During the year under report the state of discipline at the institutions under the department has been satisfactory.

Fisheries.

[Report of the Department of Fisheries for the year ending 31st March 1923.]

245. The activities of the Fishery Department were of necessity restricted during the year both by the need of economy and by the shortage of staff. The Director of Agriculture continued to be in charge of the department in addition to his own duties. The Retrenchment Committee's recommendation for the temporary abolition of the Fishery Department was accepted by Government and effect has since been given to the decision.

The problem of breeding carp in confined waters received considerable attention. Important work under this head was the confirmation of the previous observation that the carp breeds in certain *bundhs* in Western Bengal and Chota Nagpur. Investigation into the habits of the *hilsa* was continued. The *jatka* fish, which is abundant in Eastern Bengal rivers, in the early part of the year, has been identified by Mr. C. Tate Regan of the British Museum, as the young of the *hilsa*. This observation is a further step in the elucidation of the life history of the *hilsa*, and brings us nearer the possibility of artificial *hilsa* culture.

The persistent propaganda of the small available staff has removed, to an encouraging extent, the apathy and conservatism of the fishing community, who are now realizing the advantages of primary education for their children. The same applies to the organisation of Co-operative Societies for the leasing of fisheries. The chief obstacle in the way of progress in this direction is not excessive conservatism, so much as the lack of means.

In regard to primary schools, satisfactory progress has been made in the Dacca Division, where there are 10 Fishery Schools. There are also two schools in the Faridpur district. The development of Fishery Co-operative Societies was steady, five new societies being registered during the year as against two in the preceding year.

The Fishery Survey was continued and the information gathered will be of considerable use when the work is again taken up. There is, no

doubt, that the large *bhils* of Eastern Bengal, which are one of the chief sources of fish supply, are in process of being silted up. As a result of this the *bhil* fisheries are gradually deteriorating.

Two Fishery Companies, established in the Madaripur subdivision of the Faridpur district, have passed the first year of their existence and they are reported to be doing well. A few others established before or during the year are still in process of organisation.

Statistics of fish imported into Calcutta show imports of 435,194 maunds as compared with 417,684 maunds in the preceding year. The supply is still far short of the demand.

Weather and Crops.

[Season and Crop Report of Bengal for the year 1922-23; Crop Forecasts of Bengal for the year 1922-23; Agricultural Statistics of India, Volume I.]

Character of the season.

246. The outstanding feature of the season was the unusually long spell of drought which prevailed from November 1921, to the end of May 1922. Such prolonged drought had not occurred in the Presidency during the past decade, and the drought in April and May was unprecedented in East Bengal. During the month of March rainfall was scanty, and preparatory tillage proceeded very slowly till the second week of April, when a fair amount of rain somewhat facilitated operations. The monsoon set in early in June, rainfall in July and August was unevenly distributed, and floods caused damage to the lowland crops, especially in parts of West Bengal. Highland crops, on the other hand, fared well. Towards the end of September and in the early part of October, rainfall was abnormally heavy in parts of North Bengal and Faridpur, causing considerable damage to the standing crops in the lowland tracts. Afterwards drought prevailed till the third week of November, when scattered showers encouraged flowering of late paddy. The preparatory operations for the spring crops commenced under favourable conditions; but complete absence of rain up till the early part of February adversely affected their growth. The rainfall in the middle of February benefited the late sown crops. On the whole the season was good for the winter rice crop and fair only for other crops.

Area under cultivation.

247. The total cropped area was returned at 27,749,600 acres against 28,161,000 acres for the previous year. The figures for the principal crops are shown in the following table:—

Name of crops.	Normal area in acres.	Area cultivated during 1921-22.	Area cultivated during 1922-23.
Rice	22,919,400	21,832,300	21,773,300
Other food grains including pulses and *marua*.	1,750,000	1,509,800	1,476,000
Jute	2,310,300	1,316,000	1,196,500*
Oilseeds	1,493,300	1,267,000	1,061,500
Tobacco	249,200	298,100	298,600
Sugarcane	239,100	220,900	200,600

* Revised to 1,550,000 acres, inclusive of Cooch-Behar.

248. The weather at the outset was unfavourable, owing to unusually prolonged drought. Consequently sowings finished as late as June. The rainfall in July and August was unevenly distributed, with the result that floods caused considerable damage to lowland crops, especially to ripe paddy in parts of North and East Bengal. Highland crops, on the other hand, fared well. On the whole, a fair crop was reaped for the province. The outturn of the different *bhadoi* crops of the province was returned at 78 per cent. of the normal against 85 per cent. of the previous year. Bhadoi crops (excepting jute).

249. The exceptionally dry weather during the early part of the year hampered sowing operations and seriously interfered with the growth of the early sown crop. In June seasonable rain fell and weeding operations were carried on satisfactorily in the *deshi* districts. The late sown crop fared well, especially on the highlands of East and North Bengal. The rise of rivers towards the latter part of the month adversely affected the crop in certain lowlying areas and caused premature harvesting in those tracts. In the East Bengal good rainfall during the month facilitated steeping and washing. The area and outturn of jute were estimated at 1,550,000 acres and 4,798,279 bales, inclusive of Cooch Behar. Jute.

250. The prolonged drought delayed preparatory tillage and sowing of broadcast paddy. The setting in of the monsoon early in June produced favourable conditions for the broadcast variety and facilitated operations with regard to transplanted paddy. The rainfall in the months of July and August caused some damage to the lowland crops in parts of West Bengal. The highland crops, on the other hand, generally fared well. Towards the end of September and in the early part of October rainfall was abnormally heavy, especially in parts of North Bengal and Faridpur, causing floods and considerable damage in a number of districts, of which Faridpur, Rajshahi, Bogra, Pabna, Nadia and Jessore were the worst sufferers. In the subsequent dry weather the crop in these tracts recovered somewhat. Scattered showers in November helped the flowering of the late sown paddy. On the whole, a satisfactory crop for the broadcast variety and a good one for the transplanted variety was reaped for the province. The provincial outturn was estimated at 98 per cent. of the normal against 100 per cent. of the previous year. Winter rice.

251. The crop suffered in consequence of drought at the outset, especially that portion of it which was not commanded by irrigation. In the beginning of the monsoon period it recovered to a considerable extent, but subsequent heavy rainfall and floods caused damage, especially in North Bengal; also in Faridpur, Bakarganj, Bankura, Midnapore, Hooghly and Howrah. The outturn for the province worked out at 79 per cent. of the normal against 82 per cent. of the previous year. Sugarcane.

252. The weather was generally favourable for preparatory tillage and sowings were done at the usual time. But thereafter continued Rabi crop

absence of rain and consequent insufficiency of soil-moisture interfered with the growth of the crops and thus reduced the outturn in many districts. The rainfall in the middle of February caused damage in some West Bengal districts, but proved generally favourable to late sown crops, especially summer paddy. The season, on the whole, was unfavourable for the early crops and fairly favourable for the late ones. The outturn of the different spring crops for the province as a whole worked out to 79 per cent. of the normal against 77 per cent. last year.

Cotton.

253. The early crop suffered at the outset from drought, but recovered somewhat in the subsequent favourable weather. A fair outturn was obtained.

The prospects of the late crop were not good owing to stunted growth caused by the heavy rains and floods in July and August. The total outturn of cotton (both early and late), exclusive of Tripura State, was estimated at 15,761 bales this year against 12,264 bales (revised) last year.

Prices.

254. Owing to the good harvest the price of rice, during the early part of the year, was somewhat lower than in the previous year. Later on a tendency to rise was evident, but the influx of new autumn rice into the market exercised a steadying effect. The prices of wheat and other food-grains remained moderate. After being depressed for years, the jute market improved enormously and the small crop in the year, under review, in spite of restricted demand, kept prices of raw fibre at a record level.

Co-operative Societies.

[Report on the working of Co-operative Societies in Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

Personnel.

255. Rai J. M. Mitra Bahadur held the post of the Registrar throughout the year and Mr. M. Thorp, I.C.S., that of the Deputy Registrar.

Development.

256. The total number of societies of all classes rose from 6,679 to 7,820 or by 17·1 per cent. against an increase of 4·9 per cent. in the preceding year, while the total membership rose from 260,142 to 292,981 or by 12·6 per cent. against 7·4 per cent. in the preceding year. The total working capital rose from 3·68 crores to 4·33 crores or an increase of 17·6 per cent. as against 10·6 per cent. in the preceding year. The more rapid expansion during the year under report may be attributed to improved economic conditions.

Provincial Bank.

257. The Provincial Co-operative Bank, as the Federation is now called, had a year of greater prosperity and its membership increased from 77 to 89 and the working capital from Rs. 25,41,391 to Rs. 34,73,336, reserve fund from Rs. 37,167 to Rs. 66,238 and share capital from Rs. 3,14,925 to Rs. 3,59,900. Deposits during the year from the public were Rs. 87,29,542 against Rs. 38,30,130. The fluid resources of the

Bank were more than sufficient and its financial position quite strong. Raja Rishee Case Law, C.I.E., retired from the post of the Chairman of the Bank and was succeeded by Mr. S. R. Das.

Central Banks

258. There was a marked increase during the year in the number of central banks, which rose from 70 to 82, excluding the Provincial Bank, the Central Anti-Malarial Society, the Calcutta Milk Union and five industrial unions. The new central banks were started in order to make the areas of these societies as compact as possible, so as to decentralise finance and supervision. The tendency towards converting mixed type central banks into pure type institutions was more marked and steps were taken in this direction during the year under report. The number of affiliated societies, the working capital, deposits from non-members and the reserve and other funds all showed a fair increase. The proportion of share capital *plus* reserve fund to the working capital of central banks was 17·9 per cent. against 18·1 per cent. in the preceding year and 17·8 in the year before. The proportion of the fluid resources of these banks was 52·2 per cent. and their financial position as a whole was thus quite sound.

Agricultural Societies.

259. The preponderance of agricultural credit societies still continues but there was a slight reduction in their relative strength which was 89·6 per cent. of the total number in the year under report as against 90 per cent. in the preceding year.

260. The number of agricultural purchase and purchase and sale societies increased from 15 to 21. It is satisfactory to note that these societies taken together worked at a profit of Rs. 5,910 during the year against a loss of Rs. 326 in the preceding year. Four societies were organised during the year in Midnapore and two in the 24-Parganas for the sale of paddy. The co-operative organisation for the joint sale of members' agricultural produce is fraught with immense possibilities, though the societies have to surmount considerable difficulties before they can attain an assured position and the central banks naturally do not want to take upon themselves the financial responsibility for ventures of this kind until the struggles of small societies have indicated the frequent causes of failure and chalked a clear line of advance out of these difficulties. The Kazipur Sale and Supply Society started co-operative sale of jute.

Co-operative irrigation.

261. The co-operative irrigation movement made very great progress during the year and the number of societies increased from 29 to 114, total membership from 1,318 to 4,689 and the working capital from Rs. 42,626 to Rs. 77,658. Of the schemes completed, the Amjhore and Rukmini Khal projects, which were stream schemes, deserve special mention. In the first scheme, which will irrigate an area of 2,100 bighas, a masonry weir has been constructed across the Amjhore Khal and irrigation channels extending to 4 miles in length have been excavated. The other scheme was for the construction of a masonry weir across Rukmini

Khal and the excavation of long and deep irrigation channels. These channels have been excavated and it is now possible to lead water from the stream to the fields of members within a radius of about a mile and a half. The Salbundh scheme, which is another big project, could not be completed during the year as the plan and estimate had to be considerably revised and a fresh contract entered into for execution.

Milk Societies.

262. The number of milk societies increased from 47 to 52, and although there was a slight falling off in the membership during the year owing to the adoption of disciplinary action against recalcitrant and disloyal members who were expelled from the society, there has been an accession since the close of the year. These societies and the Union to which they are affiliated have now succeeded in obtaining an assured position through their excellent management. The supply obtained maintained its high reputation for its quality. The Union is now engaged in making an experiment in pasteurising milk with modern appliances whch may lead to great development.

Naogaon Ganja Cultivators' Co-operative Society.

263. The membership of Naogaon Ganja Cultivators' Co-operative Society increased from 3,021 to 3,221, the share capital from Rs. 30,830 to Rs. 33,710. The profit of the Society was Rs. 3,40,897.

The society continued to prosper in spite of the effects of the flood of September 1923.

264. The total membership of credit societies rose from 52,341 to 62,070, the share capital from 19 lakhs to 22½ lakhs, the non-members' deposits from 18½ lakhs to about 27 lakhs and the total working capital from 67 lakhs to 83 lakhs.

The stores movement again showed few signs of progress and had in fact numerous instances of failures.

The Dacca Conchshell Workers' Society had a prosperous year and its profit rose from Rs. 481 to Rs. 18,024. The success achieved by this society was considerably discounted by the fact that a capitalistic spirit had come into existence with the result that a large number of *bona fide* conchshell workers, who had been kept out of membership, were unable to obtain supplies of conchshells for their legitimate requirements at a reasonable price. Enquiries were held during the year into the working of the society and proposals were considered for reorganising on a proper basis the co-operative supply of conchshells to all *bona fide* workers.

The number of fishermen's societies rose from 49 to 54. Their membership rose from 754 to 1,098, and the total working capital from Rs. 37,642 to Rs. 49,018. These societies generally worked well and there has already been some improvement in the condition of the co-operative fishermen. An attempt is being made to introduce methods of co-operative disposal, and the importance of fishery societies as the only means of educating the fishermen and improving the industry is now recognised.

The co-operative organisation of weavers received some impetus during the year from the formation of four industrial unions on the lines of the Bankura Industrial Union and the number of weavers' societies increased from 120 to 142. The question of introduction of cheap electric power to large weaving centres in rural areas is being explored.

The co-operative organisation of silk reelers was taken up during the year and a society was started which was financed by the Malda Central Bank.

There was hardly any improvement in the working of the two zamindari societies.

The number of registered anti-malarial societies rose from 8 to 13, all of which were affiliated to the Central Anti-Malarial Society.

Bengal Co-operative organisation.

265. The Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society continued to bring out regularly its two periodicals—the *Bengal, Bihar and Orissa Co-operative Journal* and the *Bhandar*, while it also published a number of pamphlets and reprints of interesting lectures. The reorganisation of the society engaged attention during the year, and proposals for the formation of Divisional Boards with a view to bringing representatives of village societies in direct touch with the activities of the society and to fostering the development of village leadership were mooted during the year.

The Information Bureau attached to the Department issued to all industrial and other societies weekly bulletins of prices obtaining in the Calcutta market, while the Department's museum attached to the Bureau was of great assistance to the industrial societies in arranging for the supply of their requirements and obtaining orders for them.

Horticulture.

[Annual Report of the Royal Botanic Garden and other Gardens in Calcutta and of the Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling, for the year 1922-23.]

The Royal Botanic Garden.

266. During the year the season was favourable for botanical operations. The early rains in June prevented serious results from the prolonged period of drought experienced during the latter part of the hot weather. Rainfall during the year was in excess of the average and the garden lakes were well filled towards the end of the rainy season, so that very little pumping was necessary throughout the dry cold weather months. The display of annuals was quite up to the standard as was also the orchid house at the end of the cold and beginning of the hot weather.

Plants and seed distribution.

267. Over 55,000 plants and nearly 9,000 shrubs and 2,600 palms were distributed and over 5,000 plants were received, chiefly gladiolus bulbs and orchids. Three hundred packets and 86 lbs. of seeds were distributed. The usual consignments of mahogany seed were received from Kew.

Calcutta Gardens.

268. The work in these gardens was mostly of a routine nature, but the renovation of the roads in Dalhousie Square was carried out at a considerable additional expenditure over the normal.

Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling.

269. The distribution of seeds and plants during the year under report was the highest in the history of the garden. In spite of pressing financial difficulties the injury to the garden, referred to in the last year's report, is gradually being made good.

Cinchona Plantations and Factory.

[Report of the Government Chinchona Plantations and Factory for the year 1922-23.]

Plantations.

270. The total area under a full complement of cinchona on the Mungpoo and Munsong plantations was 3,026 acres as compared with 3,128 acres in 1921-22. During the year the cultural conditions of both plantations were satisfactory.

Outturn.

271. Five hundred and sixty-five thousand one hundred and thirty-five lbs. of mixed plantation bark were worked up in the Quinine Factory against 510,160 lbs. in 1921-22, excluding Java bark purchased for the Government of India, which was also worked up during the year. The total quantity of quinine sulphate produced, including the product of the bark purchased in Java, amounted to 43,636 lbs. against 44,254 lbs. in the previous year. In addition 8,294 lbs. of cinchona febrifuge and small quantities of other quinine salts were also manufactured.

The total provincial quinine sulphate reserve stood at 31,685 lbs. 9 oz. at the end of the year 1922-23. The value of the stock of all sorts on the 31st March 1923 was Rs. 7,19,373-12-6, of which quinine sulphate worth Rs. 6,33,711-4-0 formed the chief item.

Forests.

[Forest Administration Report for the year 1922-23. Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue.]

Administration.

272. There was a change in the area of the different classes of forests under the Forest Department, due mainly to the increase of 17 square miles under reserved forests in the Jalpaiguri, Buxa and Cox's Bazar Divisions and a decrease of 4 square miles under protected forests in the Jalpaiguri Division.

Working plans.

273. Satisfactory progress was made in the preparation of the working plans. No new working plan was sanctioned during the year, but the working plans for Chittagong, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar Divisions were completed. Considerable progress was made in the working plan of the Kalimpong Division.

Communications and buildings.

274. Owing to financial stringency practically no new works could be taken up. Only 14 miles of roads, bridle paths and other paths were completed during the year. The total expenditure on communications

amounted to Rs. 6,002 against Rs. 29,374 spent during the preceding year. Old roads and paths to the extent of 1,260 miles were repaired at a cost of Rs. 27,918 against Rs. 42,819 spent on the repairs of 1,262 miles in the previous year. Rupees 29,857 was spent on the repair of existing buildings and Rs. 29,589 on the construction of new buildings.

275. The area in which measures for fire protection were tried was increased by 6,964 acres in the Buxa Forest Division. The protective measures adopted were on the same lines as in previous years. The percentage of successful protection was 97·6 as compared with 95 in 1921-22. The cost of protection per square mile was Rs. 8·7 as compared with Rs. 7 in the previous year. The increase in the cost of protection was due to comparatively prolonged drought which necessitated a more expensive staff. Protection from fire.

The principal fires took place in the Buxa Division covering an area of 6,233 acres.

276. There was no reduction in the area open to grazing, which amounted to 45 per cent. of the total forest area. The number of cattle impounded for illicit grazing was 4,779 against 3,715 in the previous year. The question of buffalo grazing in the Cox's Bazar Division received the special attention of the Forest Department and the local officers. Protection from cattle.

277. Departmental work for extraction of timber increased slightly specially in the Kurseong Forest Division. In addition to the usual demand for departmental buildings and bridges and for the supply of specimens, large quantities of timber were supplied to the Eastern Bengal and Bengal Duars Railways. Logs of timber extracted from the neighbouring forest blocks and sawn at the departmental saw mill at Sukna were supplied for box planking to local tea gardens. The total outturn of timber of different kinds in all the forests amounted to 9·40 millions of cubic feet as against 7·75 millions of cubic feet in the previous year. The departmental depôt opened at Darjeeling during the previous year for the continuous supply of charcoal worked satisfactorily. The Buxa Timber and Trading Co., Ltd., which was granted a license for the extraction of timber from the Buxa Forest Division, and which completed their royalty-free period during the previous year, have since the close of the year under review gone into liquidation, but the Government revenue has been safeguarded. Messrs. Andrew Yule & Co., Ltd., extracted bamboos from the Kasalong reserve in the Chittagong Hill Tracts Forest Division in accordance with the terms of their agreement for the manufacture of paper-pulp and paid the minimum royalty laid down in agreement. Departmental kheddah operations conducted jointly with the Bhutan Darbar in the Bengal Bhutan Mahal in the Jalpaiguri district, resulted in a net profit of Rs. 27,738 to the Forest Department. Exploitation.

The Forest Engineer appointed in 1921-22 suggested improved methods of extraction which promise to be very remunerative. The Burma Oil Co. continued to prospect for mineral oil in the Cox's Bazar Division. A match expert made an extensive tour in all the Forest Divisions in order to ascertain the species of wood suitable for match manufacture and the quantity available.

Mortality caused by wild animals.

278. The number of persons killed by tigers in the Sundarbans during the year was 25 compared with 21 in the previous year, and an average of 14 during the five preceeding years. The number of tigers killed in the Sundarbans was 33.

Financial results.

279. The financial results of the year were distinctly satisfactory The total forest revenue amounted to Rs. 23·11 lakhs as against Rs. 18·98 lakhs in the previous year. The net income of the Department amounted to Rs. 10·79 lakhs as against Rs. 8·10 lakhs in 1921-22. The creditable feature of the administration during the year is that while the expenditure decreased by nearly Rs. 57,000 the revenue increased by more than Rs. 4 lakhs.

Manufacture and Mines.

[Statistical Abstract for British India.]

Jute.

280. The area under jute increased by about 16 per cent. and the estimated outturn to by 32 per cent. as compared with the year 1921-22. There were 81 jute mills at work, employing on an average 316,887 operatives daily—an increase of 32,149 over those of the previous year. The number of looms and spindles at work in the jute mills were 46,957 and 991,741, respectively, as against 42,529 and 896,815, respectively, in 1921-22. The authorized capital in rupees, sterling and dollars was Rs. 20,63,76,000, £2,125,000 and $17,800,000, respectively.

Cotton.

281. Twelve cotton mills were at work, employing on an average 12,733 persons daily as against 12,843 persons in 1921-22. The number of looms and spindles was 2,556 and 322,296, respectively, as compared with 3,002 and 341,656 in the year 1921-22. The authorized capital was Rs. 1,87,00,000.

Tea.

282. The area under tea in 1922 was 185,400 acres (including figures for Tripura State) as against 182,200 acres in the previous year. The quantity of tea manufactured was 71,834,933 lbs. in 1922. The number of tea plantations totalled 375, employing on an average 133,592 permanent and 5,622 temporary hands daily.

Silk.

283. There was only one silk mill under operation of the Indian Factories Act which gave employment to 147 operatives daily on an average. As a cottage industry, silk weaving was carried on by over 2,500 families in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Burdwan, Midnapore, Murshidabad, Rajshahi, Bogra and Malda in Bengal during the

year under report. The total production of seed (cocoons) during 1922-23 may be taken to be 24,000 *kahans* of disease-free seed raised by the Government nurseries and the selected rearers attached to the nurseries.

Sugar.

284. The acreage under sugar crops decreased from 276,600 to 261,600 in 1922-23. The Cossipore Sugar Works, which is the only regular sugar factory in the province, coming under the operation of the Factories Act, employed on an average 620 persons daily. Sugar-making was carried on as a cottage industry in the 24-Parganas, Jessore, Khulna and Howrah districts, and gave occupation to a large number of persons.

Coal.

285. The number of coal mines worked under the Act during the year was 283 as against 268 in 1921, while the daily average number of persons employed decreased from 45,813 in 1921 to 44,893 in 1922. The total outturn of the collieries rose from 4,259,642 tons in 1921 to the satisfactory figure of 4,328,986 tons in spite of a prolonged strike on the East Indian Railway, which caused very considerable dislocation of the coal trade at the beginning of the year. The strike was settled towards the end of April, but it was several months before conditions became normal. During the monsoon the output was also handicapped by the flooding of many mines and several disastrous fires due to spontaneous combustion occurred in the coal fields, involving stoppage of output for the areas affected. There was no serious epidemic disease and the general health of the labour force in the coal fields during the year was good.

Paper.

286. There were three paper mills at work, employing on an average 4,322 persons daily. These mills produced 19,612 tons of paper valued at Rs. 1,15,13,169 during the year.

Wool.

287. Two woollen mills were at work during the year, employing on an average 337 persons daily. The number of looms and spindles was 32 and 2,168, respectively. These mills produced 293,851 lbs. of blankets valued approximately at Rs. 3,66,593. One of these woollen mills is a Government concern, viz., the Dacca Jail.

Salt and saltpetre.

288. The quantity of refined saltpetre produced during the year was 1,742 maunds as compared with 4,399 maunds in the previous year. The decrease in the production was partly due to the absence of orders from foreign countries and partly to the closure of two refineries. The quantity of salt educed in the process of refinement was 85 maunds as compared with 288 maunds in 1921-22.

MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURES IN EACH DIVISION.

Presidency.

289. Four small engineering firms of Calcutta have made match-making machinery suitable for the purposes of a cottage industry and three others have placed electric fans on the market. A condiment factory and a lozenge factory commenced work near Dum-Dum. Hosiery goods began to be produced on a large scale from a Tollygunge

factory, started under good auspices. The big tanneries of Messrs. Chari & Co. at Kanchrapara were nearing completion. The date sugar season commenced late in Jessore district and the outlook of the industry is not bright. The establishment of small weaving factories, both for cotton and silk, was an interesting development in Murshidabad.

Burdwan. The textile industries steadfastly grew in volume, though the preceding year was not a particularly prosperous one for many of them. The metallurgical industries also showed a tendency towards expansion, though an enterprise for high class steel manufacture, which selected Panchra (Birbhum) for its factory site, had to be closed down practically at its inception, on account of financial difficulties. The oil-milling and rice-husking industries had a prosperous year. Among the cottage industries, the brass and bell-metal wares manufacture and silk weaving showed signs of decline but cotton weaving improved again.

Dacca. The principal industries of this division were cotton weaving, conch shell, bracelet making and mother-of-pearl button making. The adoption of fly-shuttle looms and Hattersley looms by the weavers was much in evidence. The conchshell industry was helped by the Industries Department in getting Ramnad and Tuticorin shells direct from Madras without the help of middlemen. The button-making industry did not thrive for want of suitable markets. Among the minor industries of this division may be mentioned manufacture of bell-metal ware, horn buttons, pen-holders, drain shutters, curtain pullers and water-proof cloth. The *kantha* needlework of Faridpur and gunny cloth weaving of Bakarganj continued to receive the attention of the Department of Industries. The oil mills and coir industries of Bakarganj did well.

Rajshahi. The jute baling industry prospered and rice mills did fairly good work. Two new rice mills were started during the year—one in the district of Malda and the other in Dinajpur. The hosiery industry of Pabna and the mango-canning industry of Malda also prospered. The Buxa Timber Trading Company's tanning extract factory at Rajabhatkhawa and the Rajshahi Tannery at Bogra commenced operations during the year. The former has been manufacturing solid tanning extract and the latter has been tanning several hundred hides for upper and sole leather per day. Cotton weaving, the most important cottage industry, developed considerably, while the brass and bell-metal industry suffered heavily on account of dull markets. Silk and *matka* weaving flourished, but silk reeling declined owing to failure of the crop. *Katari* cloth weaving of Malda improved owing to favourable market demands. Match-making was started in Malda, Pabna and Rangpur and a shell-button factory in Malda.

Chittagong. The movement for the production of *khaddar* gave an impetus to the weaving industry and small weaving factories sprang up in many places in the division. No sailing ships were built at Chittagong during the

year. Rope-making industry at Chittagong, jute-weaving at Tippera and Noakhali, manufacture of cane and bamboo articles and manufacture of buttons in Tippera were continued during the year. The umbrella handle-making industry of Chittagong and Tippera districts improved. Some 21 small factories for the manufacture of matches with hand machines were started during the year. Oil mills of Chittagong and Tippera and rice mills of Barisal, brass-ware industry in Tippera and Chittagong, *hukka, nalcha,* pen-holder industries of Comilla, fishing net industry of Chittagong, and bamboo mats and *sital patis* of Chittagong prospered. A new ginning factory was established at Chittagong.

Working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (XII of 1911).

[Annual report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal for the year 1922.]

Administrative measures.

290. The most important event of the year 1922 was the amendment of the Indian Factories Act, 1911. The revised Act came into force on the 1st July 1922, but it was not possible to enforce all the new provisions at once. The amended Act represents an endeavour to improve the conditions of labour, but the labour in many concerns did not appreciate some of the new provisions; for instance, in some factories the workers flatly refused to accept the increased rest period provided in section 21, unless the working hours were reduced by a corresponding period, *i.e.*, they had no objection to taking one hour's rest in the middle of the day in place of the half-hour given under the old Act, provided they were not required to start work earlier in the morning or to continue work later at night.

Number of factories, operatives and inspections, certification of children.

291. The number of factories at the close of the year in Bengal was 975 against 720 in the preceding year, the number of new factories brought under the operation of the Act being 271 as compared with 51 in the year 1921. The daily average number of operatives employed during the year also increased from 465,412 in 1921 to 517,080. About 442 factories remained uninspected during the year owing to the absence of two of the senior inspectors on leave for a considerable portion of the year. An increase in the staff is under contemplation. Twenty thousand six hundred and twenty-nine children were certified under section 7 of the Act by the several Certifying Surgeons of Factories.

Sanitary and housing arrangements, water-supply, general health.

292. During the year the progress in respect of the betterment of conditions in factories was maintained. New or additional septic tank installations were erected in eight factories. The hand service latrines provided in places where there are no underground sewers, however, proved insanitary in many cases, a condition due partly to the unsatisfactory conservancy arrangements of the municipalities concerned. The ventilation and lighting arrangements of factories were generally good, except in certain printing presses in Calcutta. These presses are being brought under the Act. The supply of drinking water was also

generally satisfactory, and the progress made in the installation of tube wells, especially in factories situated outside the Calcutta industrial area, is bound to give good results. The employers continued to devote attention and money towards improving living accommodation for their employees. Eleven textile factories erected new additional cooly lines. The accommodation provided for the tea garden coolies was also reported to be satisfactory. The general health of the operatives was fairly good.

Wages, general condition of labour, strikes.

293. There was no noticeable change in the rates of wages, and beyond temporary shortage due to strikes or sickness no marked shortage of labour was felt in any industry, with the exception of some engineering works, in which there has for some years been a shortage of both skilled and unskilled labour. The strikes which occurred were mostly of a temporary nature and labour conditions were more settled than during the year 1921.

Accidents and safety devices.

294. The total number of accidents reported during the year was 1,609 or 191 more than the previous year; of these 60 were fatal, 606 serious and 943 minor. The increase was attributed to a large number of new factories being brought under the operation of the Act. The percentage of accidents on the total number of operatives was, however, only 0·31, and the problem of the efficient fencing of machinery and of the provision of satisfactory interlocking arrangements between the dangerous parts of the machines and the starting gears, and other safety devices, continued to receive attention from the inspecting staff.

Prosecutions.

295. Ten prosecutions were instituted, in all of which convictions were secured.

Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1922-23. Annual Statement of the Seaborne Trade and Navigation of the Bengal Presidency. Annual Statement of the Sea-borne Trade of British India with the British Empire and Foreign Countries. Annual Statement of Coasting Trade and Navigation of British India. Statistics of British India, Volume I—Commercial Statistics. Review of the Trade of India, 1922-23.]

I.—FOREIGN SEA-BORNE TRADE.

[Report on the Maritime trade of Bengal for 1922-23.]

Trade position.

296. After the unrelieved depression of 1921-22 it is satisfactory to note that the trade of Bengal showed some recovery in the year under review. The dead-weight of unsold or rejected stocks was lifted and in spite of the unusually heavy imports of gold and silver, the adverse balance of trade was turned to a favourable one. In this result the abundant harvests of the year and the general fall in the local prices of foodstuffs had their share. Unfortunately, the unsettled state of the European exchange showed no prospect of stability and prevented a large increase of the demand for India's surplus food products and raw materials.

297. The total trade of Bengal, foreign and coasting, excluding treasure, was just over 244 crores, against 239 crores of the previous year, made up as follows:—

Total trade of the province.

Foreign Trade (Private and Government).

	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Rs.	Rs.
Imports—		
Private ..	1,02,72,94,664	83,51,58,261
Government ..	3,22,43,228	1,99,76,541
	1,05,95,37,892	85,51,74,802
Exports—		
Private	90,46,11,089	1,19,08,97,690
Government	97,15,820	73,22,856
	91,43,26,909	1,19,82,20,546

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Coasting Trade (Private and Government).

Imports—21 crores 56 lakhs against 23 crores 80 lakhs of the previous year.
Exports—17 crores 12 lakhs against 18 crores 69 lakhs of the previous year.

It will be noticed that the value of imports fell by nearly 19 per cent. while that of exports increased by 31 per cent. The fall in value did not, however, represent a decline in the volume of trade as much as a reduction in price. Indeed in regard to large classes of goods, *e.g.*, cement, kerosene, aniline dyes, iron and steel, there was an increase in quantity but a decrease in value. Among the articles of which the value showed a decrease the most important were machinery, sugar, railway materials, grains, pulse, metals, instruments, motor cars, timber and matches. As regards exports, both jute manufactures and raw jute showed an improvement, while there was a considerable decrease in the exports of raw cotton, raw hides and skins, indigo and cotton twist and yarn.

In the coasting trade the value of imports and exports each dropped by nearly 2 crores.

The United Kingdom's share of the import trade increased from 63 to 70 per cent. Those of Japan, Germany, Straits Settlements and Belgium showed a slight improvement. In the export trade the United Kingdom claimed 28 per cent., the United States 26, Germany 6 and Japan 3 per cent.

A further noticeable feature of the year's trade was the increase in the imports of treasure in the case of both gold and silver which rose, respectively, in value from 21·54 lakhs to 62·09 lakhs and from 47·63 lakhs to 244·73. The whole of this treasure was imported on private account. Exports of treasure were unimportant.

Of the total imports from foreign countries of Rs. 85,51,74,802, the port of Calcutta absorbed Rs. 84,64,89,000, and of the total exports to foreign countries of Rs. 1,19,82,20,546. Calcutta claimed Rs. 1,14,18,14,000.

Principal articles of import.

298. The following table shows the comparative importance of the principal articles in the import trade of Calcutta. Articles which form less than 50 per cent. of the total imports have been omitted from the list:—

	Average value for the 5 years ending 1918-19.	1921-22.	1922-23.	Percentage of proportion to total imports of merchandise.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
Cotton goods	23,41,65,534	27,19,20,425	33,66,41,420	40·73
Metals and ores	5,61,18,068	10,53,85,403	8,95,68,055	10·84
Machinery and millwork ..	2,18,49,587	14,96,26,513	7,85,93,799	9·51
Sugar	6,65,35,377	12,44,53,420	5,54,67,832	6·71
Railway plant and rolling stock	1,35,60,440	8,70,71,313	4,41,56,374	5·34
Oils	1,93,18,552	2,97,62,377	2,49,97,383	3·02
Hardware, excluding cutlery and electroplated ware ..	1,11,35,247	2,12,61,602	1,50,92,461	1·83
Salt	1,41,83,967	1,13,47,066	1,19,95,246	1·45
Instruments, apparatus and appliances	68,11,145	2,13,99,150	1,18,15,413	1·43
Liquors, including methylated and perfumed spirits ..	76,33,279	1,05,60,617	98,11,584	1·19
Spices	76,96,438	77,63,021	96,30,919	1·17
Glass and glassware ..	46,72,505	72,04,548	83,33,742	1·01
Postal articles not specified ..	42,42,061	80,45,445	80,49,179	·97
Provisions and oilman's stores .	65,60,309	78,95,272	77,55,805	·94
Chemicals and chemical preparations	74,62,195	77,97,574	76,90,210	·93
Tobacco	45,41,756	48,95,422	73,38,462	·89
Paper and pasteboard ..	60,13,840	65,92,355	66,94,906	·81
Rubber	42,36,095	61,37,946	66,75,511	·81
Motor cars, motor cycles and parts thereof	38,95,236	91,33,633	65,67,737	·79
Building and engineering materials	42,73,767	85,82,008	64,97,315	·78
Drugs and medicines (excluding chemicals and narcotics) ..	44,40,657	55,27,004	54,57,563	·66
Paints and painter's materials	40,05,286	49,06,124	46,41,423	·56
Matches	42,65,035	61,87,326	45,76,336	·55
Tea-chests, entire or in section	69,74,637	43,56,104	40,96,369	·50

The important articles are separately dealt with in detail in the following paragraphs:—

299. Imports of cotton piece-goods showed a further advance from 652 million yards in 1921-22 to 932 million yards in the year under report, in spite of the low prices offered for finished goods. The quantity of grey goods rose from 478 million yards, worth Rs. 1664 lakhs, to 720 million yards, worth Rs. 22,40 lakhs. The trade in white goods advanced from 137 million yards to 148 million yards, though the value fell from Rs. 515 lakhs to Rs. 492 lakhs. There was also an increase in the imports of coloured piece-goods from 37 million yards to 64 million yards. The United Kingdom occupied the commanding position she has always held in the piece-goods trade, her share being 98 per cent. in grey, 98 per cent. in white, and 92 per cent. in coloured goods. Cotton manufactures.

Imports of twist and yarn increased by 1 million lbs. to 15 million lbs., but the value dropped from Rs. 272 lakhs to Rs. 236 lakhs. The share of the United Kingdom in this trade, however, suffered at the expense of cheaper products from Japan, which supplied 8 million lbs. valued at Rs. 94 lakhs against 6 million lbs. valued at Rs. 1,13 lakhs from the United Kingdom.

Imports of handkerchiefs and shawls rose from Rs. 3·6 lakhs to Rs. 5·4 lakhs, practically the whole being supplied from the United Kingdom. The trade in hosiery slightly improved, rising from Rs. 27·7 lakhs, to Rs. 34·6 lakhs, though it was much below the pre-war average.

300. Imports of metals showed an increase to 256,890 tons from 229,508 tons in 1921-1922, but there was a great reduction in value. The principal features were the large quantities of bars, rods, angles, beams and pillars imported, which might be attributed partly to recent industrial developments and partly to the activity in building stimulated by a fall in prices. Fifty-nine per cent. of wrought-iron and steel came from the United Kingdom. The imports of unwrought iron in the shape of pig iron showed a considerable fall owing to the improved quality and cheaper cost of pig iron produced in India. Of other metals there was an increase in the imports of galvanized sheets and plates, brass, copper, german silver, zinc, aluminium and quicksilver. Lead and tin were the only metals which showed a decrease. Imports of metals and metal manufactures.

301. Imports of machinery and millwork decreased in value from Rs. 14,96 lakhs to Rs. 7,86 lakhs or by 47 per cent., due chiefly to the dulness of trade arising from the general unsettled economic and political conditions prevailing during the year. Machinery for jute mills and electric machinery, which generally form the largest items of imports, showed a decrease in value amounting to 60 and 50 per cent., respectively. A similar decline occurred in respect of belting, boilers and prime movers. Machinery and mill work.

The value of cotton mill machinery, however, advanced by Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 75·79 lakhs and that of sewing and knitting machines and of tea machinery increased by 46 and 54 per cent., respectively.

Sugar.

302. Imports of refined sugar showed a heavy decrease both in quantity and value. Java and Mauritius supplied as usual more than 99 per cent. of the whole. India's purchase of Java sugar was smaller during the year, due to the fact that Java was able to obtain higher prices elsewhere and also that India had large stocks in hand from the previous year. On the other hand imports from Mauritius advanced remarkably from 308 tons to 8,598 tons, the reason for this being mainly the freeing of supplies for India owing to non-purchase of the entire Mauritius crop by the Royal Commissioners. Imports of unrefined sugar fell from 453 tons to 60 tons and of molasses (mostly from Java) from 58,309 tons to 58,010 tons. It is satisfactory to note that the acreage under sugarcane in India has shown a further increase of 14 per cent.

Railway plant and rolling stock.

303. The total value of railway material imported fell by 51 per cent. Imports on private account decreased by 49 per cent. and imports on Government account by 70 per cent. Ninety-five per cent. of the total imports were supplied by the United Kingdom.

Mineral oil.

304. Imports of mineral oil from foreign countries and Burma showed an increase of over 3,000,000 gallons. Imports of kerosene oil from foreign countries increased from 19,004,045 gallons to 19,685,932 gallons, but decreased in value from Rs. 129 lakhs to Rs. 124 lakhs. In the case of lubricating and batching oils also there was an increase in volume and a decrease in value. Imports of other kinds of mineral oils decreased by 9 per cent. in volume and 35 per cent. in value.

Hardware.

305. Imports of hardware declined in value from Rs. 213 lakhs to Rs. 151 lakhs, the shares both of the United Kingdom and the United States of America in this trade suffering at the expense of Germany, whose supplies increased from Rs. 10 lakhs to Rs. 26 lakhs.

Salt.

306. The total imports of foreign salt amounted to 406,700 tons against 360,000 tons in 1921-22, but there was not a corresponding increase in the value and consequently the price of salt in the local market was easier. Aden was the chief source of supply, but Liverpool, Port Said, Spain, Germany and Italian East Africa all sent more salt than in the previous year. As usual, prices rose during the six months April to September, but fell back to a lower level by the end of December 1922, and owing to the overstocking of the market, a further drop was registered in March 1923, the quotation for Aden salt being Rs. 108 per hundred maunds ex-duty in June, Rs. 112 in September, Rs. 95 in December 1922, and Rs. 90 in March 1923.

307. The total import of liquors increased in quantity, but decreased in value. The imports of ale, beer and porter from the United Kingdom was 66 per cent. of the total. Germany more than doubled her supplies, and replaced supplies from Japan and the Netherlands by cheap German beer. Liquors.

The quantity of brandy imported decreased, but larger quantities of rum were imported from Java, practically all of which was either bonded or denatured on arrival. Imports of sparkling wines from France increased, but those from England decreased. Imports of port wine from England, however, increased from 7,795 to 13,690 gallons. No direct imports from Portugal were made. The imports of Italian vermouth rose from 4,405 gallons in 1921-1922 to 10,106 gallons, but those of French vermouth fell from 17,301 to 15,985 gallons.

308. There has been some recovery in the importation of motor cars which showed an increase in number but a decrease in value. This result was due chiefly to the fall in American exchange and to the reduction in the price of American and Canadian cars. There is some amount of truth in the contention that the high rate of duty has seriously affected the number of British cars imported, but it should not be forgotten that as a result of the high factory cost and engineering trade disputes many factories in Great Britain were turning out only about 10 per cent. of their capacity in the early part of 1922. Motor vehicles.

309. The increased demand of the second half of 1921-22 was maintained throughout the year, resulting in an increase of 64 per cent. in quantity and 49 per cent. in value. The cheaper American brands were apparently seriously affected by the high rate of duty and by the increased output from local factories which was reflected in a considerable fall in imports from the United States. The United Kingdom, however, supplied cigarettes valued at Rs. 56 lakhs against Rs. 33·80 lakhs of the previous year. Tobacco.

310. The total imports showed a net increase, the most notable increase being in glass beads and false pearls. Japan was the largest supplier, followed by Czecho-Slovakia, Italy and Germany. Glass and earthenware.

311. The value of the import trade of Chittagong with foreign countries declined from Rs. 118 lakhs to Rs. 87 lakhs. The large number of locomotives imported in the year 1921-22 resulted in the reduced receipts of railway materials valued at Rs. 13 lakhs as compared with Rs. 61 lakhs in the preceding year. Other articles advanced from Rs. 57 lakhs to Rs. 74 lakhs, improvements occurring chiefly in the imports of salt, metals and tea-chests. The only items showing a noticeable decrease were machinery, cotton goods and hardware. Import trade of Chittagong.

EXPORT OF MERCHANDISE.

Foreign export trade.

312. The following table shows the value and comparative importance of the principal articles in the export trade of Calcutta:—

	Average for the 5 years ending 1918-19.	1921-22.	1922-23.	Percentage of proportion to total merchandise exported.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
Jute manufactures ..	40,07,13,885	29,91,54,374	40,27,66,444	35·87
Jute, raw	12,03,33,095	13,71,08,939	21,46,79,144	19·12
Tea	12,55,10,614	13,13,63,816	15,02,78,221	13·38
Lac	2,53,92,983	7,90,80,520	10,25,38,323	9·13
Grain, pulse and flour ..	2,40,38,422	94,11,734	4,97,76,109	4·43
Seeds	2,25,23,662	3,05,79,483	4,47,11,988	3·98
Hides and skins, raw ..	5,13,57,321	3,82,05,215	3,45,20,811	3·07
Opium	2,17,68,364	2,05,38,975	2,44,87,383	2·18
Cotton, raw	96,21,605	3,68,69,209	2,08,22,293	1·85
Metals and ores	80,26,148	1,14,78,740	1,79,08,561	1·59
Postal articles	19,37,088	1,45,20,681	61,83,387	·55
Mica	50,51,981	55,47,242	58,60,926	·52
Oil-cakes	17,03,993	33,22,454	54,71,180	·49
Dyeing and tanning substances	27,75,338	38,40,172	53,33,154	·48
Woollen manufactures ..	9,53,059	28,79,702	45,47,147	·41
Manures	23,13,450	53,31,465	41,43,246	·37
Hemp, raw	49,91,954	26,93,313	36,67,678	·33
Saltpetre	60,99,540	38,57,198	33,51,523	·30
Provisions and oilman's stores	22,19,575	25,25,961	27,86,581	·25
Oils	54,21,488	15,61,263	18,49,695	·17
Spices	6,88,960	17,60,430	15,77,635	·14
Apparel (excluding hosiery, boots, etc.)	6,88,378	12,56,394	14,92,062	·13
Coal, coke and patent fuel ..	48,10,018	15,07,513	14,77,589	·13
Tobacco	11,81,170	4,90,352	13,62,707	·12
Silk, raw	8,70,850	6,84,407	10,17,107	·09
Indigo	85,21,279	32,71,327	9,70,590	·09

The more important articles of export are noticed below:—

Jute.

313. There was considerable misgiving at the beginning of the year that the threatened shortage of raw material would seriously affect the volume of the jute exports. Calcutta prices for "First Marks" went up to Rs. 91 per bale owing to the continued drought in April and May. The setting in of the monsoons, however, relieved the anxiety and prices fell to Rs. 74 in August. They firmed up to Rs. 84 in September when, as a result of the final forecast, prices gave way slowly, closing at Rs. 74 in March 1923. London prices rose and fell in sympathy and the year generally enabled the trade to recover from the depression into which it had fallen. The unsettled political condition of Europe, however, makes the future still uncertain.

The export of raw jute from Calcutta rose from 2·56 million bales to 3·10 million bales or by 21 per cent. and in consequence of the good prices obtained the value rose from Rs. 13·71 lakhs to Rs. 21·47 lakhs or by 57 per cent. Germany, hampered by the depreciation of the mark, was

obliged to reduce her purchases, though she still managed to secure the largest share. Shipments to the United Kingdom, despite unemployment and short-time prevailing in Dundee, made a remarkable recovery. The purchases of the United States, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, China, Argentine and Brazil also showed an increase, but there was a falling off in shipments to Japan and the Netherlands. Shipments of gunny cloth rose from 1,120 million yards valued at Rs. 15·92 lakhs to 1,251 million yards valued at Rs. 21·24 lakhs. There was an appreciable increase in the shipments to the United States, Canada, China and Australia, but the other leading markets, including the United Kingdom and Argentine, showed a decrease. Nothing was taken by France, which was once a good customer.

The number of gunny bags shipped fell, but the value rose. Australia was the best customer in this.

Tea.

314. The recovery made by the tea trade in 1921-22 from the great depression of the year 1920-21 was maintained throughout the year under report, the most favourable feature being the advancement in the price of common teas. The steady low value of the rupee and a reduction in freight rates were favourable factors in the revival of the trade. Although the total quantity exported from Calcutta fell by 16 per cent., the value advanced by 14 per cent. from Rs. 13,14 lakhs to Rs. 15,03 lakhs, the highest on record. Exports from Chittagong expanded from 57 million lbs. to 64 million lbs. Russia, once a good purchaser, has dropped out of the market altogether. The bulk of the export, viz., about 80 per cent., went to the United Kingdom. Shipments from Calcutta to other countries are of little importance, but it is interesting to note that Canada doubled her pre-war consumption. Exports to South America showed a gratifying recovery, but those to Australia were seriously affected by competition with cheaper teas from Java.

Lac.

315. The exports of lac increased by 9 per cent. in quantity and by 30 per cent. in value. The United States took the bulk of the shipments of button lac and shellac, Italy and Australia being the other chief purchasers.

Hides and skins.

316. Both the quantity of hides and skins exported as well as their value showed a decline, the tonnage contracting by 8 per cent. and the value by 10 per cent. In spite of her financial difficulties Germany maintained the lead which she recovered in the previous year and secured more than half the tonnage shipped. Italy, the next best customer, and Norway, Sweden and Austria Hungary and the United States also increased their purchases, but the shipments to the United Kingdom fell still further to 791 tons, which is only one-tenth of the quantity she took three years ago. The export of raw skins also showed a marked decline, due chiefly to the smaller demand for goat skins from the United States.

Metals and ores.

317. In consequence of the great expansion in the production of iron and steel in the United Kingdom, Belgium and France, exports of manganese ore made a substantial recovery. Belgium, the United Kingdom,

France and the United States were the best customers. Germany dropped out altogether and the Netherlands, Italy and Japan cut down their orders.

Production of pig iron in 1922 was disappointing, but Japan nearly doubled her purchases and the total shipments advanced in value from Rs. 53·53 lakhs to Rs. 91·46 lakhs.

Mica.

318. The drastic reduction in prices during the year resulted in the value advancing only by 6 per cent., though the total quantity shipped expanded by 170 per cent. There was a large increase in the shipments to the United States and an appreciable increase in those to the United Kingdom. The Netherlands took nothing at all, but there were noticeable improvements in the purchases made by Germany and Japan.

Raw cotton.

319. The exceptional trading of 1921-22 was not repeated and exports from Calcutta receded almost to the pre-war level in quantity, though better values were well maintained. The bulk of the trade was absorbed by China and there were increased demands from Germany. Shipments to Japan were, however, less than in the preceding year, owing to freight being cheaper from Bombay. Kapok continued to be in good demand, chiefly in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France.

Oilseeds.

320. The total quantity of oilseeds of all kinds exported during the year amounted to 164,517 tons valued at Rs. 4,37·40 lakhs, as compared with 124,867 tons valued at Rs. 2,99·08 lakhs in the preceding year. The export of linseed increased from 119,840 tons to 158,400 tons. The bulk of the trade (90,786 tons) went to the United Kingdom, the oil industry of which recovered during the year from its previous depression, owing to unusually large demands for linseed oil from the United States. The demands from other countries for Indian linseed also showed some increase and much better prices were obtained. Calcutta's trade in other seeds was of minor importance.

In exports of vegetable oil, mustard oil, castor oil and cocoanut oil there was an appreciable improvement, Australia, Mauritius and Natal absorbing the bulk of the shipments.

Grain, pulse and flour.

321. The embargo on the export of rice was lifted at the end of 1921-22, but restrictions on wheat, wheat-flour and other grains and pulses were not removed till the end of September 1922. The rice crop was again an excellent one and there was a large surplus for export. Arabia, Mauritius, the West Indies and the Bahrein Islands, which contain a resident Indian population, were quick to take advantage of the removal of the export restrictions, and purchased more than their pre-war annual averages. Ceylon, however, took less than a quarter of her pre-war consumption, preferring to obtain her requirements from Burma; while the supplies to Natal and Aden were smaller than their normal requirements. Exports of both wheat and wheat-flour from Calcutta were insignificant, but after the removal of the restrictions on

the export of pulses, the exports advanced from 14,940 tons to 45,704 tons, the United Kingdom taking 13,227 tons, the bulk of the remainder being shared by Ceylon, Mauritius, France and the Straits Settlements.

Coal.

322. The total quantity of coal exported from Calcutta by sea, both foreign and coastwise, including bunker coal, amounted to 1,462,300 tons against 2,175,604 tons in the previous year. The removal of the embargo on the export of coal to foreign countries from the 1st January, 1923, did not result in any appreciable revival during the last three months of the year under report, and the only shipments during that quarter were 38,527 tons to Ceylon and 500 tons to Kenya Colony. During the period of the embargo, the markets for Bengal coal were captured by Natal, Wales and Japan. African coal is destined to be a serious competitor, particularly on the Bombay side and in the Colombo market, where prices are more favourable than for the best Bengal qualities.

Hemp.

323. Exports made a great recovery from the depression into which the trade had fallen in the previous year. The quantity advanced by 37 per cent. and the value from Rs. 26·93 lakhs to Rs. 36·68 lakhs. Belgium, the United States and Germany increased their purchases, but shipments to the United Kingdom continued depressed and showed a decline. Of the smaller purchasers, France, Egypt, Sweden, Portugal and Italy increased and the Netherlands, Greece, Denmark and Spain decreased their indents.

Indigo.

324. Exports of natural indigo decreased from 6,340 cwts. to 2,180 cwts., owing to the smaller prices of synthetic indigo, which has undermined the market in the Far East.

Distribution of export and import trade of Calcutta by countries.

325. The following table shows the distribution of the import and export trade of Calcutta:—

Imports (Merchandise).

	Average for the five years, 1914-15 to 1918-19.		1921-22.		1922-23.	
	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.
United Kingdom ..	34,73	60·7	64,25	63·2	57,53	69·6
British Possessions ..	3,50	6·1	5,64	5·5	3,53	4·3
United States	4,25	7·4	8,76	8·6	5,20	6·3
Germany	30	·5	1,40	1·3	2,22	2·7
France	28	·5	55	·5	51	.6
Belgium	12	·2	1,68	1·6	1,64	1·9
Italy	42	·7	59	·6	60	.7
Japan	5,10	8·9	3,51	3·4	3,36	4·06
Java	6,45	11·3	12,48	12·3	5,31	6·42
South America	1	·02	..	..	..	..
Total (including other countries).	57,24	100	1,01,54	100	82,65	100

Exports (Merchandise).

	Average for the five years, 1914-15 to 1918-19.		1921-22.		1922-23.	
	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.
United Kingdom ..	26,35	30·1	22,06	25·4	27,41	24·1
British Possessions ..	14,16	16·2	11,34	13	16,32	14·4
United States	22,26	25·5	22,31	25·6	30,37	26·8
Germany	62	·7	5,77	6·6	7,68	6·8
France	3,03	3·5	2,77	3·2	3,84	3·4
Belgium	8	·09	1,58	1·8	2,42	2·1
Italy	2,45	2·8	1,24	1·4	2,19	1·93
Japan	2,26	2·6	5,31	6·1	3,30	2·90
Java	1,62	1·8	1,85	2·1	1,76	1·55
South America	4,74	5·4	3,41	3·9	4,55	4·01
Total (including other countries)	87,35	100	86,99	100	1,13,44	100

The total trade of the United Kingdom with Calcutta amounted to Rs. 85 crores as compared with Rs. 86 crores in the year 1921-22, her share in the grand total being 43·32 per cent. as against 46 per cent. in the preceding year. Although the value of her imports decreased by nearly Rs. 700 lakhs, owing chiefly to smaller business in machinery and railway materials, her share of the total import trade of Calcutta improved from 63 to 70 per cent., the value of her contribution of cotton goods exceeding that of the previous year by Rs. 600 lakhs. Tobacco, umbrellas and fittings, paper and pasteboard, provisions, drugs and medicines, boots and shoes, books, metals and iron, liquors, paints, building materials, electric instruments and tea-chests were the other items of her import which showed improvement. As regards export trade, the United Kingdom proved a better market for Indian merchandise and the value of her purchases advanced from Rs. 2,200 lakhs to Rs. 2,700 lakhs, constituting 24 per cent. of the total exports. This improvement was due chiefly to the higher prices ruling during the year, which, in the case of tea, resulted in an increase in value in spite of a decrease in quantity. Shipments of raw jute, linseed, lac and jute manufactures, grain and pulses and woollen carpets showed a satisfactory revival.

The improvement in trade by Germany was phenomenal, her sales advancing from Rs. 141 lakhs to Rs. 222 lakhs and her purchases amounting to Rs. 769 lakhs or Rs. 200 lakhs more than in the year 1921-22. Under imports marked increases were recorded under metals, hardware, glassware, beer, aniline dyes, instruments, chemicals, drugs and medicines, salt and toys. Exports to Germany consisted mostly of raw jute and raw hides and lac. Import trade with the other European countries

was fairly steady. In the export trade, after Germany, France was the best customer, followed by Belgium and Italy. In each case, the improvement was due to larger purchases of raw jute.

Java maintained her leading position in Calcutta's import trade with Asiatic countries, although the value of sugar sent by her decreased. Japan sent more cotton yarn and cloth but less cement and matches. Both she and China took much less raw cotton and gunny bags, while Java decreased her purchases of opium. The United States lost ground very seriously, the contraction of her business in metals and machinery and hardware being particularly marked.

II.—FRONTIER TRADE.

[Report on the Frontier Trade of Bengal, 1922-23.]

Total trade.

326. The total value of the trade with the adjacent States of Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet and Bhutan in the year ended 31st March 1923, remained practically unchanged at Rs. 198 lakhs as in the preceding year. The figure excludes the transactions in treasure, the registration of which was as usual somewhat defective. There was a small decrease in the value of imports, but this was compensated for by a corresponding increase in exports, manufactured articles and provisions being responsible for this increase.

Imports.

327. The principal articles of imports into Bengal were fruits, vegetables and nuts, valued at Rs. 77 lakhs, animals (living) Rs. 27 lakhs, raw wool worth Rs. 20 lakhs, which was received entirely from Tibet, provisions, valued at Rs. 8 lakhs, sent by Sikkim and Nepal, spices Rs. 4⅓ lakhs supplied mostly by Sikkim, and hides and skins worth Rs. 4 lakhs were consigned chiefly from Tibet.

Exports.

328. The chief articles which figure in the export trade of Bengal are manufactured articles, such as cotton manufactures, chiefly piece-goods, metals, silk and woollen piece-goods. The exports of cotton manufactures were valued at Rs. 12 lakhs, of which piece-goods accounted for Rs. 10 lakhs. The total value of exports of metals and manufactures thereof amounted to Rs. 4½ lakhs against Rs. 3 lakhs in the preceding year, Tibet being the chief customer. The total value of exports of provisions amounted to Rs. 7⅓ lakhs as compared with Rs. 4 lakhs in 1921-22. The exports of grain and pulse, chiefly rice, were valued at Rs. 3 lakhs, and Sikkim alone took about a half of the exports. The value of oils, chiefly kerosene, exported, amounted to Rs. 2⅓ lakhs; woollen and silk piece-goods worth about Rs. 2½ lakhs and Rs. 2 lakhs, respectively, were exported, mainly to Tibet.

III.—COASTING TRADE.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1922-23.]

Coasting trade.

329. The good harvests reaped in Bengal during the year 1922 resulted in decreased demands for Burma rice, and the removal of

restrictions on the exports of rice and pulse from Calcutta to foreign countries put an end to the heavy and abnormal demands made for these foodstuffs by other provinces for shipment to foreign ports. Owing chiefly to these reasons the total value of the coasting trade of Bengal, including Government stores, decreased from Rs. 42½ crores to Rs. 39 crores. Imports of private merchandise decreased in value from Rs. 24 crores to Rs. 21 crores and exports from Rs. 18 crores to Rs. 16 crores. The total value of the trade of Calcutta with other Indian ports declined from Rs. 37,82 lakhs to Rs. 33,68 lakhs.

Imports.

330. The import trade of Calcutta with Indian ports fell from Rs. 21,89 lakhs to Rs. 19,71 lakhs. Cotton goods, including twist and yarn (Indian manufacture), continued to be the principal item. While there was a falling off in receipts from the Bombay mills, the imports from the Tuticorin mills showed a remarkable increase from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 64 lakhs. Burma increased her shipment of mineral oil to 60 million gallons, and of stick lac from Rs. 18 lakhs to Rs. 56 lakhs, but her despatches of rice, for the reasons stated above, decreased from Rs. 283 lakhs to Rs. 78 lakhs. Her shipment of teakwood also fell. Imports of raw cotton, mostly from Madras and Bombay, advanced from Rs. 44 lakhs to Rs. 59 lakhs and spices (chiefly pepper) valued at Rs. 41 lakhs came from Madras and Burma.

xports.

331. The total export trade of Calcutta with other Indian ports fell from Rs. 15,73 lakhs to Rs. 13,97 lakhs. Jute manufactures, which formed the principal article of export, advanced from Rs. 3,00 lakhs to Rs. 3,31 lakhs, Burma securing the bulk of this trade. Tea continued to be in good demand, specially in Bombay for shipment to the Persian Gulf Ports, and advanced from Rs. 47 lakhs to Rs. 79 lakhs. Other items showing noteworthy increases were spices from Rs. 49 lakhs to Rs. 75 lakhs, provisions (chiefly ghi) from Rs. 41 lakhs to Rs. 50 lakhs, oils (chiefly linseed and mustard) from Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs and tilseed from Rs. 6 lakhs to Rs. 16 lakhs. There were marked decreases under rice from Rs. 2,25 lakhs to Rs. 1,23 lakhs, pulse and gram from Rs. 88 lakhs to Rs. 49 lakhs, wheat-flour from Rs. 46 lakhs to Rs. 36 lakhs, coal and coke from 1,300,000 tons valued at Rs. 1,88 lakhs to 830,048 tons valued at Rs. 1,30 lakhs, and Indian cotton twist and yarn from Rs. 38 lakhs to Rs. 23 lakhs.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Buildings and Roads.

Revenue and Expenditure.

332. The revenue realised during the year amounted to Rs. 9·09 lakhs, of which Rs. 7·73 lakhs were provincial.

The expenditure totalled Rs. 119·80 lakhs, including about Rs. 20 lakhs for Establishment and Tools and Plant, or Rs. 38·85 lakhs less than the previous year. Of this total, Rs. 10·20 lakhs were for Central Works,

Rs. 16·03, for Provincial Works (Reserved) and Rs. 82·17, for Provincial Works (Transferred). Rs. 8·46 lakhs were expended on contribution works and Rs. 2·92 lakhs on grants-in-aid.

333. A four-storeyed building at the General Post Office at Calcutta and the extension of the stationery godown in the Telegraph Store Yard at Alipur were completed. Central Buildings.

334. Rupees 50·76 lakhs were expended under the "Transferred" head, including Rs. ·47 lakh for cost of English stores, and Rs. 4·17 lakhs under the "Reserved" head. Provincial Buildings.

Education buildings accounted for Rs. 5·36 lakhs, buildings in connection with General Administration Rs. 7·02 lakhs, and buildings relating to Administration of Justice, Police, Medical, Jails and other Civil Works Rs. 42·51 lakhs.

Of the several buildings completed, the more important were an office of the Bengal Survey Department at Chetla, a two-storeyed Civil Court and Reserve Police lines at Burdwan, two pavilions for the accommodation of surgical cases and a new kitchen at the Campbell Hospital at Sealdah and an Eye Hospital at the Medical College Hospital at Calcutta. The construction of the main block of the Bengal Government Press at Chetla and the Police Hospital at Sibpur were nearly completed.

335. The total expenditure fell from Rs. 27·30 lakhs to 25·65 lakhs, of which about Rs. ·15 lakh was spent under the head "Arboriculture." Communications.

The total length of metalled roads in the province rose from 3,140 to 3,316 miles and of unmetalled roads from 32,824 to 33,918 miles, exclusive of the roads maintained by the municipalities. Of these, 2,426 miles of metalled and 33,255 miles of unmetalled roads were maintained by District and Local funds.

Two important roads in connection with the development of Kalimpong as a hill station were completed. Considerable progress was made in the Duars road scheme, and some of the roads on the Calcutta maidan were improved by applying a tar macadam surface.

Other works undertaken by the Department included the construction of many new bridges and replacement of old wooden bridges on existing roads by permanent masonry or steel structures.

336. Owing to an impression that State agency in engineering work is more expensive than private or District Board agency, the Bengal Retrenchment Committee made various recommendations, which are stated below:— Retrenchment.

(1) Construction of works costing over Rs. 50,000 by architects assisted by clerks of works.

(2) A system for carrying out work under the supervision of architects.

(3) Construction of buildings costing less than Rs. 50,000 by heads of departments, technical advice and supervision in the mufassal being given by the District Engineer.

(4) Repairs in Calcutta to be carried out by the Public Works Department, petty repairs in the mufassal by heads of departments, and other repairs in the mufassal by District Engineers.

(5) Repairs to all roads, except a few of provincial importance, to be handed over to district boards to maintain or not as they please.

(6) Committee to be formed to go into the question of routine and accounts work in Public Works Department offices, and to make recommendations for eliminating all unnecessary work.

(7) Elimination of infructuous estimating and designing by entitling the Public Works Department to decline such work unless funds in the near future can be guaranteed.

(8) Abolition of the Stores Department.

(9) Reduction of Public Works Department officers.

As regards recommendations (1) to (5), the opinions of local officers have been invited and the points are still under the consideration of Government. Regarding (6), a Committee consisting of Messrs. B. G. Gwyther, Superintending Engineer, and A. R. Lamb, Assistant Accounts Officer, office of the Accountant-General, Bengal, was formed to investigate the present system of accounts and routine work in the Public Works Department offices. Their recommendations for eliminating certain unnecessary work in these offices or adopting a simpler system than obtains at present in the Department are under consideration, orders having been issued on some of them.

Regarding (7), an executive order has been issued by the Public Works Department, which will result in a diminution in the number of detailed plans and estimates prepared for major works.

Regarding (8), it has been decided to retain the subdivision with a curtailment of activity in dealing with stores, and a consequent reduction of establishment.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.

Barisal.

337. There was practically no erosion during the year. Protective measures were, however, taken, and repairs costing Rs. 2,247 were carried out.

The *char* which formed at the west bank and extended from the Government brickfield at Barisal increased considerably towards the north, south and east.

Patuakhali.

338. There was some surface erosion and protective measures were taken by throwing in cages at a cost of Rs. 344.

Noakhali.

339. The erosion along the front of the district and the town of Noakhali continued during the year, but the rate was less than in previous years. As there is an appreciable danger of the town and civil buildings being subjected to a new attack by the river in the course of the next few years preparations to construct the new civil buildings at Maijdi are being pushed on.

340. The following other works were completed during the year:—

(1) *Pabna.*—Certain repairs to the revetment of the Ganges bank were completed and further work was in progress.

(2) *Sardah.*—The lining of the bank of the embayment which occurred at the lower end of the Sardah revetment, and certain additional protective works were completed.

(3) *Nawabganj.*—The work of constructing spurs in the bed of the river Mahananda was completed.

341. The following works were in progress at the close of the year—

(1) Diversion of the Talaimari embankment No. 55 at Rampur Boalia.

(2) Construction of a retired embankment of the river Ghaghat and certain extra protective works at Gaibandha.

Railways.

Administration.

342. The following light railways are in some respects subject to the control of the Government of Bengal:—

	Gauge.	Length in miles.
	Ft. In.	
(1) Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway	2 0	51·00
(2) Bengal Provincial Railway (Tarkeswar to Tribeni)	2 6	33·27
(3) Howrah-Amta Light Railway	2 0	43·87
(4) Howrah-Sheakhalla Light Railway	2 0	19·75
(5) Baraset-Basirhat Light Railway	2 6	52·24
(6) Jessore-Jhenida Railway	2 6	36·75
Total ..		236·88

The remaining lines of railway in this Province are under the direct control of the Government of India, Railway Department (Railway Board).

Mileage.

343. In the year under review no new lines of railway were opened to traffic in this presidency; the mileage open on 31st March 1923, was the same as on 31st March 1922, viz., 3,269·92 miles.

Surveys of projected lines.

344. No surveys of proposed lines were sanctioned by the Government of India during the year.

Aerial ropeways.

345. As a result of the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed for the purpose, the Bengal Aerial Ropeways Bill, 1921, was withdrawn, and a revised Bill (the Bengal Aerial Ropeways Bill, 1923) was submitted, and the sanction of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council obtained to certain clauses of it.

Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Company of Calcutta proposed the survey of a ropeway from Kalimpong Road station on the Teesta Valley Railway to Yatung in the Chumbi Valley, but Government were not prepared to finance the proposal.

Mr. J. O. Shoobridge's schemes for aerial ropeways in the Darjeeling district are still in the preliminary stages of consideration.

Ishurdi-Rampur-Boalia-Nachoul Railway.

346. In response to their representation, the District Board of Rajshahi were informed that Government were prepared to consider definite proposals from the District Board in so far as they applied to the construction of a light railway from Nator to Rajshahi (Rampur-Boalia) only, and on the distinct understanding that no compensation was to be demanded by the proprietors of the light railway on account of the possible future construction of the Ishurdi-Rampur-Boalia-Nachoul or other broad gauge railways in that area.

East Indian Railway.

347. A request was received from the Government of India in the Railway Department (Railway Board) for the views of this Government on the question of the future management of the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsula Railways. After consulting the Commissioners of Divisions and other important public bodies in Bengal the Railway Board were informed that, in the opinion of this Government, the future management of the East Indian Railway should be entrusted to a Company domiciled in India. No opinion was expressed as regards the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

Howrah-Amta and Howrah-Sheakhalla Light Railways.

348. The District Boards of Howrah and Hooghly and the Municipality of Howrah declined to exercise their right under section 41 of the Bengal Tramways Act, III of 1883, to purchase the Howrah-Amta and Howrah-Sheakhalla Light Railways, which their agreements entitled them to do in 1923.

The Bengal Provincial Railway.

349. The attention of the Manager and Engineer, Bengal Provincial Railways, was drawn to the unsatisfactory financial results of the working of the line and its extension from Dasghara to Jamalpurganj

and he was informed that, as the Dasghara-Jamalpurganj extension had already involved some loss to Government, every endeavour should be made to improve matters, failing which it might become necessary for Government to consider the exercise of the powers vested in them under clause 14 of the contract dated the 1st August 1919, between the Secretary of State for India and the Railway Company.

Northern Bengal floods.

350. In September 1922, heavy floods took place in Northern Bengal and serious damage was caused to several sections of the Eastern Bengal Railway. Complaints having appeared in the public press to the effect that the disaster was due to the insufficiency of waterways in the railway embankments, the Government of India in the Railway Department (Railway Board) deputed Rai Bahadur Rala Ram, C.I.E., I.S.O., Chief Engineer, Patiala State (late Chief Engineer, Eastern Bengal Railway), to enquire into the matter in its relation to the railways and with special reference to the question whether any portion of the flooding could be ascribed to insufficient waterways in the Railway banks. The report embodying the results of the enquiry shows that the flooding was due to the exceptionally heavy rainfall during the year in the districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Bogra and Rangpur. To guard against future calamities of this sort the Rai Bahadur recommended that more waterways should be provided on the following sections:—

(*a*) Santahar-Jamalganj Section, about 150 feet.

(*b*) Santahar-Kahaloo Section, about 480 feet.

(*c*) Sara-Serajganj Line, about 400 feet (effective).

IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT.

[Administration Report of Irrigation Works for 1922-23.]

Canals (Irrigation and Navigation).

351. The engineering problems that confront the Irrigation Department in Bengal are somewhat peculiar. The province lies for the most part below the highflood level of the network of rivers that intersect it and the problems relate therefore mainly to operations of a defensive nature, such as navigation and protection of land, roads, railways and buildings from floods and erosion. The rivers themselves irrigate the land when in flood and also deposit silt, which acts both as a fertilizer and in building up the land itself, and the problem is mainly one of regulation of the water on the land, provision for its drainage and the control of river courses. It is only in a minor degree that irrigation for cultivation comes within the Department's scope.

352. The statements below show the financial effects of the transaction of the Department during the year 1922-23 as compared with the previous year:—

	1922-23.			1921-22.		
	Capital expenditure.	Working expenses.	Total.	Capital expenditure.	Working expenses.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Works for which Capital and Revenue accounts are kept.						
Irrigation	....	1,67,874	1,67,874	(-) 241	1,78,896	1,78,655
Navigation	30,51,905*	11,54,912	42,06,817	85,65,358*	10,26,092	95,91,450
Total ..	30,51,905	13,22,786	43,74,691	85,65,117	12,04,988	97,70,105
Works for which neither Capital nor Revenue accounts are kept.						
Irrigation	....	43,464	43,464	....	36,170	36,170
Navigation, embankment and drainage works.	....	13,63,660	13,63,660	....	13,61,088	13,61,088
Total ..	....	14,07,124	14,07,124†	..	13,97,258	13,97,258†
GRAND TOTAL ..	30,51,905	27,29,910	57,81,815‡	85,65,117	26,02,246	1,11,67,363‡

*Inclusive of the expenditure on the purchase of dredgers.
†The large decrease during 1922-23 is due to the curtailment of expenditure on the Grand Trunk Canal and dredgers.
‡Exclusive of the expenditure on the four anti-malarial projects in the Jabuna, the Nowi Sunthi, the Amta and the Arool Bhil projects.

	RESULTS IN 1922-23.			RESULTS IN 1921-22.		
	Receipts.	Working expenses.	Profit (+) loss (-).	Receipts.	Working expenses.	Profit (+) loss (-).
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Works for which both Capital and Revenue accounts are kept.						
Irrigation (*a*) ..	2,37,854	1,67,874	(+) 69,980	2,32,836	1,78,896	(+) 53,904
Navigation (*b*) ..	8,10,528	11,54,912	(-)3,44,384	7,65,454	10,26,092	(-)2,60,638
Total ..	10,48,382	13,22,786	(-)2,74,404	9,98,290	12,04,988	(-)2,06,698

(*a*) Midnapore Canal.
(*b*) Hijili Tidal Canal, Calcutta and Eastern Canals and the Madaripur Bhil Route.

353. The following statement shows the areas irrigated during the year as compared with the average of the triennial period ending March 1922:— Irrigation.

	Midnapore Canal.			Eden Canal.		
	Kharif (including hot weather).	Rabi.	Total.	Kharif (including hot weather).	Rabi.	Total.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Average of the triennium ending March 1922 ..	86,611	1,312	87,923	21,854	129	21,983
For 1922-23 ..	80,054	1,886	81,940	21,324	321	21,645

Embankment and Drainage Works.

354. The expenditure on embankments and drainage works, including charges for Establishment, Tools and Plant, was Rs. 12,83,217. Expenditure.

355. The total length of embankments of all classes maintained by Government during the year was 1,313 miles 825 feet as compared with 1,343 miles 1,376 feet in the preceding year. Length of embankments.

356. A survey was made during the year of the flooded area between Tildanga and Dhulian stations in the Murshidabad district and the expenditure incurred on it was Rs. 1,221. Surveys and investigations.

The survey of the Saraswati river from Gopalnagar to Tribeni was completed and a special survey for the Chetna Escape Project was in progress during the year.

The survey operations of the Dunia and Barunda Basins were completed and necessary borings were made near Norghat, Terapakhia and Mosagram for testing the subsoil, etc., for the proposed locks and sluices.

357. The Dankuni, Howrah and Rajapur and Burrojola Drainage Works were efficiently maintained at a cost of Rs. 24,993 against Rs. 17,052 during the previous financial year and against the average of Rs. 11,300 which has been fixed for their maintenance. Works undertaken under the provisions of the—(a) Bengal Drainage Act, VI of 1880.

The maintenance and repairs of the drainage of Berhampore town and the Bistupur Bhil were carried out at a cost of Rs. 1,529 against Rs. 3,116 spent in the previous financial year. An expenditure of Rs. 1,574 was incurred on the maintenance of the Gobra Nala and the removal of obstructions therein against Rs. 1,079 in 1921-22.

(b) The Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act, VII of 1895, and Bengal Agriculture and Sanitary Improvement Act, VI of 1920. Anti-malarial projects.

358. The Arool Bhil, Nowi Sunthi, Jaboona and Amta Drainage projects, which were started under the Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act, VIII of 1885, were proceeded with under the new Bengal Agricultural and Sanitary Improvement Act, 1920, work on these schemes was, however, stopped during the year, as it was decided that the schemes should be held in abeyance until their financial position was cleared up and the schemes regularised under the new Act. The Magrahat Drainage Scheme, which was carried out under the Sanitary Drainage Act, was efficiently maintained during the year.

(c) Bengal Embankment Act, II of 1882.

359. The Churrial Drainage Works were maintained in good condition during the year at a cost of Rs. 2,731 against Rs. 1,792 of the previous year.

The transactions of the year for each of the above works are briefly described in the following summary, which is divided for convenience into Circles of Superintendence:—

SOUTH-WESTERN CIRCLE.

Major Irrigation Works (Unproductive).

Midnapore Canal.

Capital outlay.

360. No capital expenditure was incurred on the Canal during the year. The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of the year was Rs. 83,10,888.

Irrigation.

361. The area irrigated from the Canal was 81,940 acres against 83,012 acres during the previous year.

The cash realisation on account of water rates during the year was Rs. 1,56,463 against a total demand of Rs. 1,61,320, including the arrears of the previous year. The amount remitted during the year was Rs. 2,270 on account of water rates against Rs. 310 of the previous year. The work of assessment and collection was fair. The percentage of realisation was 97·05 per cent. as compared with 97·5 per cent. in 1921-22.

Navigation.

362. The navigation receipts during the year were Rs. 44,904 as compared with Rs. 40,704 during the year 1921-22.

Financial results.

363. The gross revenue and working expenses (direct and indirect) of the Midnapore Canal during the year amounted to Rs. 2,37,854 and Rs. 1,82,875, respectively, as against Rs. 2,32,836 and Rs. 1,91,646 in the preceding year. The balance of net revenue for the year under report amounted to Rs. 54,979.

There was no expenditure during the year on extensions and improvements, the survey of the river Cossye near the Midnapore Anicut having already been completed. The accounts show a credit of Rs. 164 against

a debit of Rs. 844 in the preceding year. The expenditure under the head "Maintenance and Repairs" was Rs. 63,130 only against Rs. 89,503 in the previous year.

Major Navigation Works (Unproductive).

Hijili Tidal Canal.

364. There was no outlay chargeable to the Capital Account of the Canal during the year. The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of the year amounted to Rs. 25,50,805. The gross revenue and working expenses (direct and indirect) amounted to Rs. 79,525 and Rs. 27,727, respectively, as against Rs. 67,507 and Rs. 27,418 in 1921-22.

The net balance of revenue for the year was Rs. 51,798 as against Rs. 40,089 in the preceding year. The increase is in tollage receipts.

Minor Irrigation Works.

Eden Canal.

365. The area irrigated from the Canal was 21,645 acres as compared with 22,144 acres and 23,008 acres in the two preceding years. The gross revenue derived during the year was Rs. 31,313 as compared with Rs. 31,337 of the preceding year. The expenditure on working expenses amounted to Rs. 43,464 as compared with Rs. 36,170 in the preceding year. The principal items of expenditure were (1) construction of the sand dam across the Damodar river at Jujuty, and (2) construction of the sand dam at Jhanpur.

Minor Navigation Works.

Orissa Coast Canal.

366. This canal lies partly in the Bengal Presidency (54·5 miles) and partly in the Province of Bihar and Orissa, each Government dealing with the length lying within its territorial limits. The receipts and working expenses of the portion in Bengal for the year were Rs. 21,387 and Rs. 14,836, respectively, as against Rs. 14,786 and Rs. 10,280 in the previous year.

Gaighatta and Buxi Khal.

367. This khal, about 7½ miles in length, is a link between the tidal rivers Rupnarain and Damodar and Rs. 2,000 has to be expended every year for its silt clearance. To avoid this recurring expenditure and the remission of rent consequent on the cessation of boat traffic during the silt clearance period, the khal has been leased out for a period of six years from the 15th June 1921 to 14th June 1927 at a rental of

Rs. 2,000 per annum, on condition that the lessees do all silt clearance at their own cost and maintain the khal to a bed level of 4·00 feet, subject to the control of the Irrigation Department.

Nadia Rivers.

368. The approximate total length of the channels comprised in the Nadia Rivers Division is 489½ miles as follows:—

	Miles.
(1) Faracca channel from Dhulian on the Ganges to Biswanathpur	19
(2) Bhagirathi from the Bhagirathi entrance at Biswanathpur to Nadia	139
(3) Bhairab Jalangi from entrance to Nadia ..	163½
(4) Mathabhanga from entrance to junction with the Hooghly	136
(5) Hooghly from Nadia to Mathabhanga ..	32
Total ..	489½

This length has been found by actual survey against 480½ miles reported in the previous year.

In addition to the above, a length of 10 miles of the Gorai river from the entrance to Kushtia, the river Ganges from Rajmahal to Goalundo, a length of 152 miles, and also the inner channel of the Ganges at Rampur Boalia from Patibona to Sarda, a length of 22 miles, remained in charge of the Nadia Rivers Division, although they are not included in the Nadia Rivers System.

The receipts and working expenses of the Nadia Rivers during the year were Rs. 18,989 and Rs. 64,255, respectively, as against Rs. 13,072 and Rs. 85,342 in the preceding year.

There has been a steady decline in the tollage receipts from the system since the construction of the Eastern Bengal and East Indian Railways on the two banks of the river Bhagirathi and it has actually been worked at a heavy loss. Accordingly it was decided to throw it open to free navigation with effect from the 1st September 1923.

SOUTHERN CIRCLE.

Minor Navigation Works.

Calcutta and Eastern Canals.

369. Under Capital Account of the Canal an expenditure of Rs. (—) 40,641 (direct) during the year is shown, inclusive of a credit of Rs. 64,845 on account of the hire of the dredgers *Foyers* and *Alexandra*.

The principal items of expenditure are—

(1) Excavating by hand a cut between Kakrabonia Khal and the Channel Creek to the south of the Doagra Channel along the steamer route.

(2) Demarcating the Government lands along Tolly's Nala. The work was in progress and an expenditure of Rs. 8,108 was incurred during the year. The receipts from navigation tolls amounted to Rs. 3,95,256 as compared with Rs. 3,87,457 in the preceding year. The gross receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) amounted to Rs. 4,22,677 and Rs. 10,24,637, respectively, against Rs. 4,12,748 and Rs. 9,36,939 in 1921-22. The result shows a deficit of Rs. 6,01,960 against a deficit of Rs. 5,24,791 in the preceding year.

Madaripur Bhil Route.

370. The expenditure (direct charges) debitable to the capital account was Rs. 2,30,410, of which Rs. 2,07,156 represents the outlay on works. This sum was chiefly spent on widening and deepening the Madaripur Bhil Route between Haridaspur and Fatteypur, a length of 20 miles, to a bed width of 275 feet. The work was in progress from previous years, but was stopped during the year for technical reasons after a total expenditure of Rs. 15,62,657 had been incurred against the sanctioned estimate amounting to Rs. 38,09,703.

The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of 1922-23 amounted to Rs. 62,54,797 against the estimate amounting to Rs. 61,19,668. The completion report of the original project received the approval of the Secretary of State in June 1919. The construction estimate had been closed with effect from the 31st March 1917, and the remaining works are being carried out under the rules governing expenditure chargeable to open capital account.

The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) during the year were respectively Rs. 3,08,326 and Rs. 1,45,877 against Rs. 2,85,199 and Rs. 1,09,243 in the year 1921-22. The other original works in progress during the year were (1) constructing a high level weir on the Madaripur Bhil Route at the 4th mile post and (2) improvement of the Goala Khal.

Improvement of the Bidyadhari river.

371. A sum of Rs. 6,803 was spent during the year for creating a spill for the improvement of the Bidyadhari river. The total outlay was Rs. 6,68,703 against the estimate amounting to Rs. 8,05,516. The Bidyadhari river is the only outlet for the sewerage of Calcutta. As the river silted up to a great extent, it was decided to improve it by dredging, the cost being met by Government and the Corporation of

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Calcutta. An expenditure of Rs. 3,40,678 was incurred on the dredging work during the year against the sanctioned estimate amounting to Rs. 10,22,412.

Grand Trunk Canal Division.

Grand Trunk Canal Project.

372. The estimate for the work was revised during the year to allow for the various changes in alignment which have been made since the project was sanctioned. The revised estimate stands at Rs. 2,79,23,122 against the sanctioned estimate amounting to Rs. 3,09,00,000. An expenditure of Rs. 9,25,655 (direct and indirect) was incurred during the year on the work, exclusive of the expenditure of Rs. 17,00,018 on account of the purchase of the dredger *Ronaldshay*. The total expenditure up to the end of the year was Rs. 1,22,92,523 (direct), of which Rs. 60,42,217 was in connection with the purchase of the dredger. The work has been held in abeyance on account of financial stringency and the staff reduced to a minimum.

River floods, etc.

373. The year was noted for floods coming in quick succession in the Cossye river which caused several breaches in the Cossye embankments. These, however, were promptly closed. The river Selye also was in high flood and the Chetua Mohankhali Circuit breached. The river Kalighya rose to its maximum level. The Bhairab Jalangi spilled over both banks, improving the sanitation of the country and fertility of the soil. There were altogether five floods in the Damodar, the highest of which occurred on the 24th September 1922. Flood precautionary measures were enforced and due arrangements made to protect the banks. The high floods did not affect the crops seriously on the right bank of the river. In the Ajai river there was only one low flood which occurred on the 15th July 1922. In the Darkessur river there were altogether 10 floods, of which those in the last week of June 1922 were very strong. In the river Rupnarain there were eight floods, of which those of 24th June, 5th August and 26th September were of importance.

CHAPTER V.—REVENUE AND FINANCE.

A.—Imperial Revenue and Finance.

374. The revenue for the year from Imperial heads amounted to 23·78 crores against 25·83 crores of the previous year. The details are shown in the statement below:—

Major Heads.	1921-22.	1922-23.	Increase.	Decrease.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
I.—Customs	14,26,71,766	15,37,94,635	1,11,22,869	....
II.—Taxes on Income	5,65,22,278	3,25,26,341	....	2,39,95,937
III.—Salt	1,55,77,569	1,84,11,089	28,33,520	....
IV.—Opium	2,39,32,077	2,97,10,747	57,78,670	....
X.—Tributes from Indian States	67,701	67,701	....	....
XVI.—Interest ..	12,22,026	12,02,617	....	19,409
XX.—Ports and Pilotage ..	13,72,303	13,23,569	....	48,734
XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments ..	1,06,691	86,584	....	20,107
XXVII.—Currency	12,035	11,736	....	299
XXX.—Civil Works	1,52,564	1,42,977	....	9,587
XXXIII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	2,09,285	2,28,279	18,994	....
XXXIV.—Stationery and Printing ..	....	39,323	39,323	....
XXXV.—Miscellaneous	9,24,322	3,19,741	....	6,04,581
XXXIX.—Contributions and assignments to the Central Government by Provincial Governments.	1,55,05,000	....	....	1,55,05,000
XL.—Miscellaneous Adjustments between the Central and Provincial Governments ..	33,426	....	....	33,426
Total Revenue ..	25,83,09,043	23,78,05,339	2,04,44,304	

The important fluctuations may briefly be explained as follows:—

Customs.—Increase due to enhancement of tariff rates.

Income-tax.—Trade depression during 1921-22 accounts for the decline in receipts.

Salt.—Increase due to reduction in the outstandings under the letter of credit system and speculative clearances towards the close of the year in the expectation of enhancement of duty.

Opium.—A larger number of opium chests were sold at the public auctions.

Ports and Pilotage.—Unfavourable trade conditions account for fall of receipts.

Stationery and Printing.—Sale-proceeds of customs publications were taken as set-off against the expenditure in the accounts for 1921-22 for printing work done by provincial presses recoverable from the Central Government.

Miscellaneous.—The large decrease is explained by unclaimed deposits having been declared a source of provincial revenue from 1922-23.

Contributions and Assignments.—Remission of the contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs as well as discontinuance of the assignment and counter-assignments on account of income-tax payable by the Provincial and Central Governments from 1st April 1922.

Miscellaneous Adjustments.—Non-adjustment of amounts due in the accounts for 1922-23.

375. Details of expenditure under Imperial heads are shown in the statement below:—

Major Heads.	1921-22.	1922-23.	Increase.	Decrease.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1.—Customs	19,29,161	20,75,601	1,46,440	....
2.—Taxes on Income	2,87,409	5,21,712	2,34,303	....
3.—Salt	3,09,761	3,24,612	14,851	....
4.—Opium	70,880	37,197	....	33,683
19.—Interest on ordinary debt ..	8,67,967	5,68,474	....	2,99,493
20.—Interest on other obligations ..	4,97,887	5,83,752	85,865	....
23.—Audit	8,04,663	7,06,166	....	98,497
27.—Ports and Pilotage—A.—Major Ports	16,79,152	15,09,092	....	1,70,060
28.—Ecclesiastical	2,63,578	2,38,767	....	24,811
29.—Political	21,905	22,915	1,010	....
33.—Public Health	3,600	3,600	....	....
36.—Aviation	886	2,282	1,396	....
37.—Miscellaneous Departments ..	4,39,284	81,478	....	3,57,806
38.—Currency	34,162	30,156	....	4,006
41.—Civil Works	10,28,728	10,55,494	26,766	....
44.—Territorial and Political Pensions	5,98,200	5,60,677	....	37,523
45.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions	1,20,088	1,85,333	65,245	....
46.—Stationery and Printing ..	39,000	....	....	39,000
47.—Miscellaneous	3,82,479	47,560	....	3,34,919
Total Expenditure ..	93,78,790	85,54,868	....	8,23,022

The principal fluctuations are explained as follows:—

Customs.—Revision of pay of ministerial establishment.

Taxes on Income.—Reorganisation of the Income Tax Department.

Opium.—The actuals of 1921-22 included a special adjustment of Rs. 31,000 (in round sum) paid by the Secretary of State in respect of a consignment of Benares opium.

Interest on ordinary Debt.—Adjustment in reduction of expenditure on interest on the loan taken by the Provincial Government from the Central Government.

Interest on other obligations.—Growth of interest on the General Provident Fund.

Audit.—Adjustment of the pay of the Accountant-General and Deputy and Assistant Accountants-General in the books of the Accountant-General, Central Revenues.

Ports and Pilotage.—(A) *Major Ports.*—Smaller expenditure on repairs to pilot vessels and smaller earnings by pilots.

Ecclesiastical.—Change of incumbents.

Miscellaneous Departments.—Smaller expenditure in connection with the Census of 1921.

Civil Works.—Larger expenditure under " Establishment."

Territorial and Political Pensions.—Death of certain pensioners.

Superannuation Allowances and Pensions.—Larger adjustment of pensions relating to central offices.

Stationery and Printing.—Adjustment of charges on account of printing work done for the Central Department not having been made in the accounts for 1922-23.

Miscellaneous.—Absence of adjustments during 1922-23 on account of the wages of interned lascars of ex-enemy vessels.

CUSTOMS.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal, 1922-23.]

Revenue from Customs.

376. The gross revenue from Customs (inclusive of ·46 lakh paid into district treasuries on account of salt imported into Calcutta) amounted to Rs. 17,04,60,000 against Rs. 15,56,79,000 in the previous year. Refunds amounted to Rs. 40,63,000 against Rs. 20,23,000, so that the net revenue amounted to Rs. 16,63,97,000 representing an increase of nearly 8·3 per cent. on the previous year's figures. This increase was the result of the higher rates of duty imposed by the Finance Act of 1922 and, as regards exports, of a recovery in the jute trade.

The gross import duties rose from Rs. 1,218·42 lakhs to Rs. 1,315·97 lakhs, of which Rs. 358·75 lakhs came from cotton goods, Rs. 154·59 lakhs from salt (including inland collections), and Rs. 182·51 lakhs from sugar. The export duty collections rose from Rs. 338·37 lakhs to Rs. 388·63 lakhs, the decrease of Rs. 13·13 lakhs in the collections on tea and raw hides and skins being more than counterbalanced by increases of Rs. 54·19 lakhs under jute and of Rs. 9·20 lakhs under rice.

Net revenue.

377. The net revenue of the Calcutta Custom House amounted to Rs. 16,46,33,100 against Rs. 15,28,49,968 in the previous year, representing an increase of nearly 8 per cent. The net income of the port of Chittagong increased from Rs. 31·82 lakhs to Rs. 47·19 lakhs owing chiefly to increased imports of salt, the duty on which advanced from Rs. 16·78 lakhs to Rs. 27·55 lakhs.

Cases under the Sea Customs Act.

378. The number of cases dealt with under the Sea Customs Act was 724, as compared with 844 in the previous year. The amount of extra duty realised was Rs. 95,764, and of penalties Rs. 14,206. There were 22 cases arising out of notices issued under section 32 of the Act, and in 15 of these the goods were taken over on behalf of Government. The number of cases dealt with in the port of Chittagong declined from 29 to 23, and the penalties imposed from Rs. 611 to Rs. 331.

Cases under the Merchandise Marks Act.

379. There were 344 cases of infringements of the Merchandise Marks Act during the year against 433 in the previous year. Of these 267 related to false trade descriptions, and 61 to improperly stamped piece-goods. The penalties imposed under this Act amounted to Rs. 5,170 against Rs. 4,315 in the previous year.

SALT.

[Salt Administration Report for the year 1922-23.]

Salt credit system.

380. The number of merchants who took advantage of the credit system of payment of duty on salt increased to 98 against 85 in the previous year and 67 in 1920-21. The amount of duty adjusted against securities was Rs. 73,59,000 against Rs. 77,18,000 in the previous year. The credit system was not in force in the port of Chittagong.

Imports.

381. The total imports into Calcutta and Chittagong increased by 10·29 per cent. and 57·39 per cent., respectively. In Calcutta imports from European countries, Egypt and Bombay increased, but those from Massowah, Aden and Madras decreased. In Chittagong, however, the imports from the latter places showed a marked increase, while those from the United Kingdom and Egypt decreased.

Consumption and prices.

382. The total quantity of salt which passed into consumption in this Presidency during the year under report was 15,114,697 maunds. This was exclusive of 23,043 maunds exported to Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. The average wholesale price per maund of salt, inclusive of duty, was 3 annas 6 pies higher than in the previous year. The average wholesale price of salt per 100 maunds in Calcutta rose from Rs. 90 in 1921-22 to Rs. 106 during the year under report. In Chittagong the average price of salt per 100 maunds fell from Rs. 132 to Rs. 120. The average wholesale price of Liverpool salt per 100 maunds was Rs. 121 as compared with Rs. 113 in the previous year.

Financial results.

383. As compared with the preceding year the receipts of the Department showed an increase, mostly under the head "Import duty on salt," of Rs. 28,33,520 or 18·18 per cent., while the charges increased by Rs. 14,614 or 4·71 per cent. The net revenue, Rs. 1,80,86,714, was larger than that of the previous year by Rs. 28,18,906 or 18·46 per cent. The charges do not include any share of the cost of the customs preventive service which is largely employed in safeguarding the salt revenue.

Trade in saltpetre.

The quantity of salt educed in the process of refinement was 85 maunds as compared with 288 maunds in 1921-22, and the quantity of *sitta* (impure salt) left in the course of refinement was 98 maunds as compared with 244 maunds. The quantity of educed salt sold during the year was 32 maunds against 939 maunds in the preceding year.

INCOME TAX.

[Annual Report on the Income-Tax of Bengal for 1922-23.]

384. The administration of Income-tax was transferred from the 1st April 1922 from the control of the local Government to a separate Department in charge of a Commissioner of Income Tax and working under the direct control of the Government of India. As, however, the Commissioner had not the trained staff to take over the administration of the entire Presidency, the work in districts outside of Calcutta continued to be done by the executive officers of this Government. The Commissioner reports that the main feature of the year was the enormous amount refunded under the provision of section 19 of the Act of 1918 due to the disastrous trade conditions during the previous year. Details and figures will be found in the report and statements submitted by the Commissioner to the Board of Inland Revenue.

B.—Revenue and Finance other than Central—Provincial Finance.

Statement of Provincial Receipts—Actuals.

385. The following statement shows the actual receipts as compared with those of 1921-22:—

	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Rs.	Rs.
II.—Taxes on Income	93,00,000	....
V.—Land Revenue	3,01,88,957	3,12,60,833
VI.—Excise	1,83,00,888	2,01,09,747
VII.—Stamps	2,73,84,490	3,02,23,619
VIII.—Forest	18,98,959	23,07,703
IX.—Registration	25,47,705	24,66,964
XII.—Subsidised Companies	1,68,464	....
XIII.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which capital accounts are kept	−2,06,698	−2,52,857
XIV.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage—Works for which no capital accounts are kept	1,86,754	2,27,826
XVI.—Interest	4,20,571	2,76,872
XVII.—Administration of Justice	11,61,631	15,18,805
XVIII.—Jails and Convict Settlements	14,76,107	11,48,627
XIX.—Police	8,65,219	4,97,277
XX.—Ports and Pilotage	21,831	26,970
XXI.—Education	10,65,481	9,27,341
XXII.—Medical	5,61,076	5,89,729
XXIII.—Public Health	9,098	15,945
XXIV.—Agriculture	2,28,669	2,12,222
XXV.—Industries	15,52,003	6,54,437
XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments	4,517	12,284
XXIX.—Exchange	....	....
XXX.—Civil Works	5,75,369	7,49,707
XXXII.—Transfers from Famine Insurance Funds	....	....
XXXIII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	2,11,428	5,52,153
XXXIV.—Stationery and Printing	3,70,034	4,77,407
XXXV.—Miscellaneous	9,89,150	38,50,697
Total ..	9,87,82,603	9,78,54,368

Statement of Provincial Expenditure—Actuals.

The following statement shows the charges on account of provincial services for 1922-23 as compared with those of 1921-22:—

	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Rs.	Rs.
2—Taxes on Income	93,892	....
5—Land Revenue	35,98,844	29,07,237
6—Excise	15,42,131	15,37,036
7—Stamps	7,67,125	8,56,825
8—Forest	13,04,515	12,31,250
9—Registration	15,64,405	17,57,260
14—Interest on works for which capital accounts are kept	12,78,303	14,12,584
15—Other Revenue Expenditure—Financed from ordinary Revenue	13,96,696	13,23,229
15 (i)—Other Revenue Expenditure—Financed from Famine Insurance Grants	625	....
16—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, and Drainage works—		
(A)—Financed from Famine Insurance Grants	....	....
(B)—Financed from ordinary Revenue	35,65,117	−24,22,734
19—Interest on ordinary debt	−8,35,570	−6,44,851
21—Sinking Funds	....	....
22—General Administration	1,09,35,053	1,16,62,172
24—Administration of Justice	1,03,65,526	1,10,88,289
25—Jails and Convict Settlements	37,05,077	34,98,778
26—Police	1,90,98,825	1,83,26,691
27—Ports and Pilotage	1,47,198	2,20,104
30—Scientific Department	16,457	22,476
31—Education	1,19,38,503	1,21,26,906
32—Medical	51,22,334	52,74,422
33—Public Health	23,34,395	24,73,222
34—Agriculture	20,44,574	20,96,445
35—Industries	11,25,788	11,87,872
37—Miscellaneous Departments	2,06,654	2,49,483
40—Exchange on transaction with London	....	....
41—Civil Works	1,41,88,857	1,00,76,279
43—Famine Relief and Insurance	2,00,375	28,725
45—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions	44,07,155	42,82,713
46—Stationery and Printing	24,31,340	18,99,911
47—Miscellaneous	8,74,721	3,10,591
51—Contributions and assignments to the Central Government by Provincial Governments	1,55,05,000	....
52—Miscellaneous Adjustments between the Central and Provincial Governments	33,426	....
Irrigation and other capital not charged to Revenue	1,46,625	33,43,279
Expenditure in England	61,04,813	30,42,643
Total	12,53,29,385	9,91,68,837

The principal variations under Receipts are explained as follows:—

Taxes on Income.—Owing to the revision of Rule 15 of the Devolution Rules which dispensed with the system of assignments and counter-assignments by the Central and Provincial Governments there was no adjustment under this head in 1922-23.

Land Revenue.—The increase was due to larger recoveries on account of *Survey and Settlement* charges and payments of *salami* in Government estates.

Excise and Stamps.—The large increases of revenue and stamps were due respectively to the collapse of the non-co-operation movement which was at its height in 1921-22 and to the levy of enhanced stamp duty.

Forest.—Increase was due to larger sale of timber to the public.

Registration.—Decrease was due to easy agricultural conditions.

Subdised Companies.—The decrease under this head was more apparent than real, as it was due to the fact that part of the revenue ordinarily creditable in the beginning of 1922-23 was paid towards the end of the year 1921-22.

Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which capital accounts are kept.—The small decrease was due to larger maintenance charges on the Calcutta and Eastern canals which were taken in reduction of receipts; whereas the increase under *Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works* for which no capital accounts are kept was attributable to larger receipts from Government embankments and recoveries from tenants on account of lands benefited by such embankments.

Interest.—As certain district boards and municipalities failed to pay the interest due, there was a fall in revenue under this head.

Administration of Justice.—Owing to recoveries from other Governments for services rendered by the Calcutta High Court and other legal officers of this Government and to a larger sale of unclaimed and escheated properties by the Administrator-General of Bengal, there was an increase under this head.

Jails and Convict Settlements.—The large fall was partly due to dislocation of jail manufactures owing to the disturbance in the Presidency Jail and partly to the presence of a large number of political prisoners and the reduction in the price of quinine treatments.

Police.—The recoveries on account of police supplied to Railways having been adjusted in the accounts for 1922-23 and owing to larger recoveries on account of additional police, there was an increase.

Education.—The large fall in revenue was due to the non-adjustment in the accounts for 1922-23 of the recoveries from other Governments on account of the cost of educational facilities rendered to the students of those provinces.

Industries.—Owing to a smaller demand from other provinces for the supply of sulphate of quinine and a drop in the market price of quinine, there was a decrease under this head.

Civil Works.—The increase under this head was due to the credit of the sale-proceeds of the residence which was being built for the use of the Chief Justice.

Stationery and Printing.—The increases under *Receipts in aid of Superannuation* and *Stationery and Printing* were due in the former case to larger recoveries from other Governments towards the cost of pensions paid on their behalf and in the latter to printing and the supply of forms to other Governments.

Miscellaneous.—The assessment of the Amusement Tax accounts for the increase under this head.

The variations under Expenditure are explained as under:—

Taxes on Income.—The decrease was due to the revision of Rule 15 of the Devolution Rules which dispensed with the system of assignments and counter-assignments by the Central and Provincial Governments.

Smaller expenditure on *Survey and Settlement* operations accounts for a decrease under the head *Land Revenue.* The increase under *Stamps* was due to larger payments of discount for sale of stamps. The decrease under *Forest* was due to smaller expenditure in departmental workings. The increase under *Registration* was due to the revision of the pay of the ministerial establishment, while that under *Interest on works for which capital accounts are kept* was concomitant with the growth of capital expenditure. Retrenchment effected a decrease under *other Revenue Expenditure—Financed from ordinary Revenue* and the decrease under construction of *Irrigation, Navigation and Drainage Works—Financed from Ordinary Revenue* was due to the inclusion in the accounts of 1921-22 of a capital outlay which could not be met that year from loan funds. The increase under *Interest on Ordinary Debt* was due to payment of interest on the loan of Rs. 50 lakhs advanced by the Central Government to this Government in 1921-22. The large increase under *General Administration* was partly due to the revision of pay of officers and establishment and partly to the expenditure incurred on account of repairs to saloon carriages. The increased expenditure under *Administration of Justice* was due to larger expenditure on salaries of District and Sessions Judges and Subordinate Judges and to the revision of pay of ministerial officers. Smaller expenditure on (1) Dietary charges in the Presidency and District Jails and (2) a smaller outlay in the purchase of raw materials in Central Jails were mainly responsible for the decrease under *Jails and Convict Settlements.* The decrease under *Police* was attributed to absence of a special payment of Rs. 5 lakhs made to the District Charitable Society in 1921-22 and to smaller expenditure in clothing charges. The increase under *Ports and Pilotage* was due to the expenditure incurred in the excavation of trial wells in connection with the proposed new Howrah Bridge, while that under *Education* was the result of larger grants to the Dacca University. The increase under *Medical* was mainly due to larger expenditure incurred on the School of Tropical Medicine and to the payment of a larger share towards the cost of the Ranchi Lunatic Asylum. Larger grants for public health purposes were mainly responsible for the increase under *Public Health.* The increase under *Agriculture* was mainly due to the contributions paid to the Government of Bihar and Orissa for training Bengal students at the Sabour Agricultural College and that under *Industries* to larger expenditure on industrial and technical education. The expansion of the Factory Department accounts for the increase under *Miscellaneous.* Owing to the curtailment of expenditure due to financial difficulties there was smaller expenditure under *Civil Works.* The decrease under *Famine Relief and Insurance* is more apparent than real, as the journal entries transferring the unexpended balance to "Famine Insurance Fund" were not made in 1922-23. Decrease under *Superannuation Allowances and Pensions* was the result of smaller payment of retired allowances and

pensions, while that under *Stationery and Printing* was due to smaller consumption of paper owing mainly to the restricted supply of forms by the Press and Forms Department. The absence of charges in 1922-23 in connection with the visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales accounts for the smaller expenditure under *Miscellaneous*. Owing to the remission of the contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs, as well as the discontinuance of the system of assignments and counter-assignments on account of income-tax payable by the Provincial and Central Governments from 1st April 1922, no expenditure was incurred in 1922-23 under the head *Contribution and assignments to the Central Government by Provincial Governments*. The increase under *Irrigation and other Capital Expenditure not charged to Revenue* was mainly due to the readjustment of the cost of certain dredgers charged to ordinary revenues in 1921-22. The decrease under expenditure in England is due to smaller expenditure on the purchase of certain dredgers for the use of the Irrigation Department, the bulk of the payment of which was made in 1921-22.

STAMPS.

[Stamp Administration Report for the three years ending the 31st March, 1923. Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue.]

Revenue.

386. The total receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts amounted to Rs. 3,14,86,217 during 1922-23, showing an increase of Rs. 31,61,015 or 11·2 per cent. over those of 1921-22. The increase occurred both under judicial and non-judicial stamps. The charges during the year amounted to Rs. 8,64,500 against Rs. 7,42,286 in 1921-22.

Judicial Stamps.

387. The sale-proceeds of court-fee stamps (excluding stamps for copies) rose from Rs. 1,75,44,514 in 1921-22 to Rs. 1,93,50,068 in 1922-23. This increase of Rs. 18,05,554, which was shared by all the divisions, was due generally to the increase in the rates of duty on account of the introduction of the Court-fees (Amendment) Act, 1922. The largest increase, Rs. 5,51,095, was contributed by the Presidency Division.

Non-judicial Stamps.

388. The revenue derived from sale of non-judicial stamps rose from Rs. 97,27,799 in 1921-22 to Rs. 1,11,19,187 in 1922-23, showing an increase of Rs. 13,91,388 or 14·3 per cent. which was shared by all the divisions. The increase was largest in the Dacca Division, viz., Rs. 5,41,920. The receipts for the Burdwan, Presidency, Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions rose by Rs. 1,49,216, Rs. 1,30,650, Rs. 3,06,059 and Rs. 2,63,543, **respectively.**

Sale of stamps.

389. The number of vendors who held licenses to sell stamps during the year 1922-23 was 5,274 against 5,329 in 1921-22, and the amount of discount allowed to such vendors rose from Rs. 4,01,121 in 1921-22 to Rs. 4,96,514 in 1922-23.

Deficient duty.

390. The total number of cases in which deficient duty and penalty were levied by the Courts under section 35 of Act II of 1899 fell from

1,609 in 1921-22 to 1,278 in 1922-23, but the amount of duty and penalty realised rose from Rs. 10,466 to Rs. 10,926. The total number of cases decided by Revenue Courts under sections 32, 37, 40 and 41 of the Act rose from 3,176 in 1921-22 to 6,047 in 1922-23, but the amount of duty and penalty realised in such cases fell from Rs. 1,19,081 to Rs. 1,04,331.

Prosecutions under the Stamp Act.

391. The number of cases instituted for infringement of the provisions of the Stamp Act was 249 in 1922-23 against 156 in the previous year; 108 persons brought to trial and 96 were convicted against 151 and 145 in the previous year. The fines imposed fell from Rs. 1,849 to Rs. 1,526. The amount of the rewards paid to informers was Rs. 425 as compared with Rs. 828 in the previous year.

Working of section 19H of the Court-fees Act.

392. Of the cases of valuation of estates for the issue of probate and letters of administration reported during 1922-23, including those pending at the beginning of the year, 70·3 per cent. were completely enquired into against 69·2 per cent. in the previous year. The proportion borne by the deficit duty required to the amount originally realised was 8·7 in 1922-23 against 10·6 in the previous year.

EXCISE.

[Report on the Administration of the Excise Department in Bengal, 1922-23. Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue Accounts.]

Excise Licensing Boards and Advisory Committees.

393. Government continued to act on the advice of the Licensing Board of Calcutta, and in areas outside the Calcutta district all recommendations of the Local Advisory Committees were carefully considered and for the most part effect was given to them.

Revenues.

394. The total excise revenue was Rs. 2,01,17,030 against Rs. 1,83,50,896 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 17,66,134. The heads which showed an increase were country spirit (Rs. 8,99,998) wines and spirits, *i.e.*, foreign liquors other than beer, medicated wines and commercial spirits (Rs. 4,65,441), hemp drugs (Rs. 2,39,957), *pachwai* (Rs. 77,822), *tari* (Rs. 69,723), commercial spirits including medicated wines (Rs. 41,009), beer (Rs. 4,109), and miscellaneous (Rs. 2,874). Against this there was a decrease of Rs. 32,760 under Opium and of Rs. 2,045 under Fines and Forfeitures. As a net result the incidence of revenue rose from 6 annas 3 pies to 6 annas 9 pies.

Country spirit.

395. The system of contract supply was the only system in force during the year. The number of shops decreased by 54 and consumption by 6,059·4 proof gallons. Consumption increased in 17 districts and decreased in 10. Outside Calcutta, where there was a drop in the consumption, the decrease was considerable in Howrah, due to the higher retail price as compared with the first two quarters of the previous year; in Midnapore, due to illicit distillation of liquor in the jungle area; in Bankura, due to the extensive illicit traffic in liquor carried on by the Sonthals, and in Birbhum, due to the increase in retail prices. Increase

occurred in the districts of Dacca, Malda, Burdwan, Jalpaiguri, Mymensingh and Rangpur and was largest in the last two. The increase was very largely due in these districts to the decline of the non-co-operation movement and the cessation of intimidation by pickets, combined with increased prosperity in the local trades and industries.

Tari.

396. The tree-tax system which was introduced in the Sadar and Serampore subdivisions of the Hooghly district and the whole of the Howrah district (with the exception of the areas included in the Calcutta district) continued in the same areas. The total number of fermented *tari* licenses decreased from 586 to 568, whereas the total receipts increased from Rs. 4,04,393 to Rs. 4,74,116.

Pachwai.

397. The total number of *pachwai* licenses issued was 29,157 as compared with 17,304 in 1921-22. The revenue from retail license fees increased from Rs. 10,08,912 to Rs. 10,69,215. The increase was considerable in the districts of Burdwan, Bankura, Dinajpur and Malda. The revenue from home-brewing licenses increased from Rs. 28,673 to Rs. 46,083.

Foreign liquor.

398. The total number of licenses issued for wholesale and retail sale of potable foreign liquor, exclusive of licenses for the retail sale of medicated wines and commercial spirits, was 778 against 810 in the preceding year. The total receipts from license fees were Rs. 2,42,626 against Rs. 3,24,159 in the previous year. The receipts from duty on potable foreign liquor manufactured in India were Rs. 13,21,742 against Rs. 7,74,768 in the preceding year, the increase being due to the enhancement in the rate of duty.

Ganja.

399. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of *ganja* was 1,184 as compared with 1,206 in 1921-22. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 36,62,432 against Rs. 34,33,436 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 2,28,996. The total quantity of *ganja* consumed amounted to 1,589 as compared with 1,638 maunds in the previous year. Consumption decreased in 19 districts and increased in 8. The decrease exceeded 10 per cent. in 6 distircts, viz., Bogra, Tippera, Nadia, Pabna, Rirbhum and Bankura and 20 per cent. in Howrah and Rajshahi. There was also a large decrease in Calcutta (14 maunds and 3 seers). The fall in consumption was primarily due to the higher retail price. The abolition of a large number of shops also contributed to the decrease. The only district in which the increase exceeded 20 per cent. was Rangpur. The increase exceeded 3 maunds in Mymensingh and Dacca. As in the case of liquor, cessation of picketing combined with enhanced prosperity was accountable for the increase. The total taxation was Rs. 55·8 per seer as compared with Rs. 50·6 in the previous year.

Bhang.

400. The total consumption of *bhang* amounted to 450 maunds against 674 maunds in the previous year. The total revenue from license

fees and duty amounted to Rs. 1,80,643 as compared with Rs. 1,91,500 in 1921-22, showing a decrease of Rs. 10,857, which was due to the very large increase in the price.

Charas. 401. The total number of retail licenses was 30, as in the previous year, and the total revenue amounted to Rs. 1,08,161 as compared with Rs. 86,309 in 1921-22.

Opium. 402. The system under which the issue of opium to retail shops is restricted to the estimated local demand continued in the districts in which it had been enforced previously. One shop in the district of Bankura was also brought under the system during the year under report. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of opium was 824 as compared with 820 in the previous year. The quantity of opium consumed fell from 1,011 maunds to 1,006 maunds. The consumption increased in 10 districts and decreased in 17. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 31,83,170 as compared with Rs. 32,15,930 in 1921-22, showing a decrease of Rs. 32,760 or 1·0 per cent.

Cocaine. 403. The total number of licenses issued to chemists and druggists for the sale of cocaine was 357 as compared with 334 in 1921-22. Fifty permits for the possession of cocaine were issued free to managers of hospitals or dispensaries not under Government supervision, of which 19 were for tea gardens in Jalpaiguri and the remainder for charitable dispensaries in various parts of the Presidency. Thirty permits were issued to qualified medical practitioners and dentists. The total number of arrests for illicit possession of cocaine was 332 against 252 in the previous year. The illicit trade in cocaine continued during the year under report. In Calcutta 541 ounces and 410 grains were seized by Excise officers, 533 ounces and 50 grains by Custom officers and 119 ounces and 72 grains by Police officers as compared with 167 ounces and 230 grains, 263 ounces and 397 grains and 29 ounces and 46 grains, respectively, in the previous year. The total quantity seized in Bengal was 1,197 ounces and 368½ grains as compared with 462 ounces and 304½ grains in 1921-22.

Excise offences. 404. The total number of persons arrested on charges under the Excise and Opium laws during the year was 5,799 and of persons convicted, 5,409, as compared with 6,762 and 6,356, respectively, in the previous year.

Road and Public Works Cesses.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

Rate. 405. Except in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the Cess Act is not in force, the road and public works cesses continued to be levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee on the valuation of lands and the annual net profits of mines and other immoveable properties.

Demands and collections. 406. The valuation or gross rental on which the cesses are based amounted to Rs. 14,41,13,282 against the land revenue demand of the

same area of Rs. 2,91,60,373. The proportion of land revenue to rental works out at 20·2 per cent. The total cess demand was Rs. 89,54,766, including arrears. The current demand showed a net increase of Rs. 2,72,607 over that of the preceding year, contributed mainly by the districts of Burdwan, Midnapore, Mymensingh, Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri. The increase in Burdwan was due to the assessment of some new quarries, mines and royalty receipts and to the revision of assessment of coal mines, while that in Midnapore, Mymensingh and Dinajpur was due to revaluation operations. The increase in Jalpaiguri is attributed of coal mines, while that in Midnapore, Mymensingh and Dinajpur was included in the current demand of the year under review owing to the change from 1st March to 28th June of the latest date for payment of instalment of cesses in respect of the temporarily-settled tea estates. The percentage of total collection on current demand attained the standard of 100 per cent. or more in Rangpur, Howrah, Tippera Jalpaiguri, Chittagong, Malda, Pabna, Bankura, Hooghly, Khulna, Birbhum and Dacca. The percentage of the remaining districts almost reached that standard.

Working of the certificate procedure.

407. The total number of certificates filed for the realisation of arrears of cesses was 42,707, a decrease of 5,762, and the total number for disposal was 59,484, of which 16,086 remained pending at the close of the year. There was a notable decrease in the number filed in the district of Chittagong. In the majority of cases arrears were realised on the issue of notices of demand and notices for the attachment of property. Recourse to actual sale had to be taken only in 1,364 cases.

Valuation and revaluation.

Revaluations on a large scale were in progress in Bankura, Midnapore, Mymensingh, Tippera and Dinajpur, of which those in Mymensingh and Dinajpur were completed within the year. The assessment of coal mines in Burdwan and of certain *gazari* forests in Dacca was revised under Chapter V of the Cess Act. Partial valuations or revaluations were undertaken in Burdwan, Hooghly, Howrah, Murshidabad, Jessore, Faridpur, Chittagong, Noakhali, Rajshahi, Jalpaiguri, Malda and Darjeeling.

Forest Revenue.

[*See* Chapter IV of this Report—Forests.]

Land Revenue.

[*See* Chapter II of this Report.]

Canal Revenue.

[*See* Chapter IV of this Report—Canals.]

Municipal Revenue.

[*See* Chapter III of this Report—Municipal Administration.]

CHAPTER VI.—VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

Vital Statistics.

[Report of the Director of Public Health, Bengal, for the year 1922.]

Climatic conditions.

408. Climatic conditions in 1922 were generally favourable both to harvests and to health in Western and Central Bengal, less so in Northern Bengal and generally unfavourable in East Bengal; and the results were reflected in the mortality rates of the various districts.

Vital Statistics—General.

409. Among the ten provinces of India, Bengal stood ninth on the list in regard to birth-rate and third in regard to death-rate. As regards natural increase by excess of births over deaths, Bengal was eighth on the list of provinces.

Birth-rate.

410. Altogether 1,275,614 births were recorded during 1922, giving a birth-rate of 27·4. This figure is 12·5 per cent. below the decennial average. The birth-rate has in fact showed a decided tendency to fall during the past 16 years, and the average figure for the past decade is 17 per cent. below that of the decennium 1897—1906. The low birth-rate of 1922 was mainly due to a great decline in the births recorded in the Rajshahi, Dacca and Chittagong Divisions. On the other hand, Bankura, Birbhum and Burdwan districts had birth-rates exceeding the mean of the previous 10 years. Murshidabad had the highest birth-rate in the province, viz., 38·4 per 1,000, and Tippera the lowest, viz., 18·7 per 1,000. The birth-rate showed a marked general improvement in many parts of the province towards the end of the year, but in the Chittagong Division it continued to decline.

Death-rate.

411. A total of 1,173,246 deaths were recorded in 1922, which is 21 per cent. below the decennial average. The death-rate was 25·2 per mille, the lowest since 1899. Improved economic conditions and the reaction from the apalling mortality of 1918 and 1919 is the cause of this reduction. The death-rate of 1922 was 32 per cent. below that of 1918, and with the exception of the Chittagong Division, where the death-rate increased by 10 per cent. over that for 1921, the improvement was general. Rajshahi district returned the highest death-rate, viz., 36·2 per 1,000, and Tippera the lowest, viz., 17·6 per 1,000.

Mortality according to age, sex and class.

412. At most age periods there was a marked improvement in the death-rate. But among infants under 1 month and between 1 month and 6 months the death-rate showed an increase over 1921. At the age period 6 to 12 months the death-rate was 34 per cent. below that of 1921. Districts with the largest proportion of deaths among infants under 1 month had the fewest deaths among older children and *vice versâ* where deaths among older children were excessive; those among very young infants were specially few in number. Deaths among children aged 1 to 10 years appear to be the best index of the health of a district.

Sex Mortality.

413. In 1922, there were 114 male deaths for every 100 females deaths, the female death-rate being 24·4 per cent. against 25·9 for males. In five districts, however, including Calcutta, the female death-rate was above that of the males. This is explained by the fact that the districts all contain a large excess of young male adult immigrants.

Deaths among Hindus declined by 18·1 per cent. in 1922 as compared with 1921, whereas among Mussalmans the decline was 14·9 per cent. In the Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions the death-rate among Mussalmans greatly exceeded that of Hindus and it was a little in excess also in the Dacca Division. In the Burdwan and Chittagong Divisions the Hindu death-rate was a little above that of the Mussalmans. The death-rates recorded for other classes are unreliable. Burdwan Division, for example, reported the ridiculously low death-rate of 4·5 per 1,000 for its Christian community.

Infant Mortality.

414. There were 239,451 infant deaths in 1922 or 11 per cent. less than in 1921. These deaths accounted for 20·4 per cent. of the total mortality. The highest infant death-rate, viz., 201 per 1,000 births, occurred in the Rajshahi Division and the lowest, viz., 151 in the Chittagong Division. In the Burdwan Division 62·4 per cent. of the infant deaths occurred within 1 month of birth, whereas in the Chittagong Division the corresponding figure was only 32·3 per cent. The highest infant death-rate, viz., 287, was in Calcutta, and the lowest, viz., 130 in Tippera district.

Child Mortality.

415. Two hundred and ninety-seven thousand four hundred and forty-eight deaths or over 25 per cent. of the total mortality occurred among children aged 1 to 15 years, representing an economic drain on the country far exceeding the loss occasioned by infant deaths. The largest proportion of child deaths, viz., 34·1 per cent. of the total mortality occurred in Noakhali. In Calcutta the proportion of child deaths was 16·7 per cent. and of the remaining districts Burdwan, with 18·0 per cent., showed the next smallest percentage.

Excess of Births over Deaths.

416. For the whole province the excess of births over deaths was 102,368 or 2·2 per mille of the population, Murshidabad showing best among the 19 districts which reported any excess. In Rangpur, births exactly equalled deaths.

Excess of Deaths over Births.

417. In 7 districts deaths exceeded births, but the thana figures show decadent areas in all but two districts, viz., Birbhum and Faridpur. Darjeeling always reports an excess of deaths owing to its large floating immigrant population and Rajshahi, Hooghly, Dinajpur, Jessore, Rangpur and Bogra, respectively, each showed a loss of population in more than half their total areas. Mymensingh showed a loss of population affecting 37·7 per cent. of its total area, owing mainly to the fact that nearly the whole of the Netrakona subdivision has become decadent. A disastrous change has occurred in this area associated with deterioration

of the rivers and an increase of malaria following the diminished flow of water, which seems to have occurred in recent years as a result of the construction of roads and railways in this part of the country.

Prices of food-grains.

418. Prices of food-grains fell during 1922, but did not fluctuate so greatly as in several former years. Mortality was lowest when the price of rice was highest and *vice versâ* as the price of rice and paddy fell deaths increased. The good harvest of 1921-22 caused prices to fall, but not so greatly as to injure the cultivating classes who benefited greatly by the increased stability of prices which followed the withdrawal of the prohibition on rice export, and hence the great reduction in mortality during 1922.

Cholera.

419. Cholera mortality fell greatly, there being only 51,712 cholera deaths in 1922 against 80,547 in 1921. Only 4·4 per cent. of the total deaths were due to cholera against 5·4 per cent. in the previous year. The Chittagong Division was the worst affected, the Presidency Division coming next. In the Rajshahi Division there was little cholera and the flooded areas especially remained wonderfully free of the disease. Of the districts, Noakhali suffered most from cholera, Jessore and the 24-Parganas coming next. The infection is specially liable to spread where there is much boating traffic and areas devoid of navigable rivers are usually exempt from serious cholera. The prevalence of cholera varies greatly in different districts. In the 24-Parganas one death in every 7 or 8 is due to cholera, in Howrah one death in 10 and even in Calcutta one death in 15 is due to this cause. But in Dinajpur only 1 death in 70 is occasioned by cholera. In 1922 nearly one-third of all the cholera deaths in Bengal occurred in the three districts of Mymensingh, 24-Parganas and Dacca and 60 per cent. of the total occurred in six districts. Cholera is thus specially localised to certain areas and could be quickly brought under control by creating local organisations for utilising systematically similar measures to those that have proved successful at the Ganga Sagar Mela. The control of cholera along these lines could be effected for an expenditure of approximately rupees five lakhs per annum, whereas the present cost of cholera to the population must represent a recurring loss amounting to anything from 25 lakhs to 2½ crores of rupees per annum. Ability to control cholera is the best measure of sanitary progress and a country which cannot control cholera, the easiest sanitary task, cannot deal successfully with the more difficult problem of preventing malaria and tuberculosis, etc. But a beginning has been made in Bengal, and excellent examples of successful cholera prevention are to be seen in the case of Hooghly-Chinsura, Nator, English Bazar, Bogra and Krishnagar and many other places.

Small-pox.

420. Small-pox was relatively quiescent in 1922, the deaths numbering only 7,864 as compared with 36,190 in 1920 and 37,010 in 1919. But a recrudescence of small-pox may be expected in 1924 or 1925, owing to the tendency of this disease to recur every 5 years or so. Calcutta Howrah

and the 24-Parganas suffer most from small-pox and the disease usually spreads rapidly from these centres along the railways. In Northern Bengal small-pox appears to spread from centres in Assam and possibly from Cooch Behar. There was a virulent outbreak of small-pox in Jalpaiguri during 1922, the disease occasioning over 5 per cent. of the total mortality, and localities in Mymensingh, Midnapore and Dacca districts also suffered more or less severely. An increasing prevalence of the disease was also noticed in a number of municipal towns in the Burdwan, Presidency and Rajshahi Divisions, which points to a threatened recrudescence of small-pox in the early future.

421. During 1922, 885,268 deaths were returned from fevers, a reduction of 17·3 per cent. on the figure for 1921. Of these fever deaths, 540,463 were ascribed to malaria and the remaining 345,805 to other fevers, including 5,564 enteric and 1,531 kala-azar. The fever death-rate of the province was 19·0 per mille, and the reported malaria death-rate was 11·6 per mille, though the latter figure is certainly too high an estimate. The actual amount of disease caused by malaria is incalculable however, but at a rough approximation there must have been over 28 million sufferers in Bengal in 1922. In the Burdwan Division 48 per cent. of the total sickness was due to malaria; in the Presidency Division nearly 42 per cent; in the Rajshahi Division 33 per cent.; in the Dacca Division nearly 17 per cent. and in the Chittagong Division 14 per cent. Burdwan, Hooghly and Birbhum districts were the worst sufferers in 1922 and Noakhali and Tippera districts were the least affected. Epidemic malaria has appeared in parts of Eastern Bengal, where railways have been constructed in recent years. In Bengal it has been noticed that malaria tends to increase with a diminution of the water-supply and to decline on the admission of abundant water. The Monikhali and Madaripur-Baragachhir drainage schemes offer examples of the bad effect that drainage may cause in increasing malaria, whereas Kumarkhali affords an example of the beneficial results of flushing a malarious locality. Fevers.

One result of the lessened prevalence of fever in 1922 was a reduced sale of quinine through post offices, 70,638 boxes of "treatment" having been disposed of against 76,439 in 1921. Strangely enough, however, the least malarious districts consume the largest amounts of the drug, the sales in Chittagong and Tippera, for example, which are relatively healthy, viz., 3·3 and 2·6 grains, respectively, per head of the population being greatly in excess of the 0·3 grain per head consumed in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri, which are far more malarious areas.

422. Only 1,531 deaths were reported from kala-azar in 1922. But 13,317 cases of the disease were admitted for treatment at Government and aided hospitals and dispensaries and over 5,000 cases at unaided institutions, bringing the total up to over 18,000. Kala-azar has been known in Bengal as far back as 1894, but little interest was taken in the Kala-azar.

incidence of the disease until the commencement of the kala-azar survey by the Public Health Department in 1919. Half the districts in the province have now been surveyed, over 300 medical men have been trained in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease and, owing to the interest that has been aroused, much good work is also being done in the treatment of sufferers of the disease by voluntary agencies.

Anti-malarial measures.

423. Encouraging results are being secured from the experimental anti-malarial projects at Meenglas, Singaran, Jangipur and Banka Valley. The re-excavation of a portion of the bed of the Saraswati river has also been followed by a reduction of malaria in the adjacent villages along the portion of the river not yet improved.

Plague.

424. There were 150 deaths from plague in 1922, 144 or 96 per cent. occurring in Calcutta.

Respiratory Diseases.

425. A total of 26,371 deaths were reported from respiratory diseases, including 2,408 from influenza, 10,615 from pneumonia, 4,477 from phthisis and 8,871 from other respiratory diseases. But these returns are all grave under-estimates. It is practically certain that various respiratory diseases occasion mortality twenty times as great as that reported under this head.

Dysentery and Diarrhoea.

426. Altogether 234,111 deaths were reported under this head during 1922, of which 16,478 were ascribed to dysentery and 6,933 to diarrhœa. Howrah, Darjeeling and Calcutta are the only places in which the returns are approximately correct. It is noticeable that rural areas in the Burdwan Division report the largest number of deaths from these causes, whereas in the Presidency Division the greatest number of deaths is returned from the towns.

Injuries.

427. Deaths from hydrophobia showed a slight decline to 253 after having steadily increased from 71 in 1917 to 379 in 1921. Deaths from snake-bite varied from 1 in 500,000 of the population in Calcutta to as high as 1 in 3,400 in the case of Murshidabad district.

Floods.

428. Abnormal and capricious local rainfall led to serious floods in the Burdwan and Rajshahi Divisions. Although much damage was done to houses and crops, the effect on health was beneficial in most cases, 49 out of 53 thanas affected reporting a very satisfactory reduction in mortality when compared with the previous year.

Income and Expenditure of Local Authorities on public health.

429. Expenditure on public health in municipalities outside Calcutta averaged about Rs. 2 per head of the population. Nearly half of this was spent on conservancy and almost 25 per cent. on water-supply. The expenditure on specific measures of disease prevention was negligible.

430. District Boards on the average received an income of less than 4½ annas per head of the population and the expenditure on sanitation and disease prevention was about 1/15th of an anna per head of the population.

Emigration.

INLAND EMIGRATION.

[Report on Inland Emigration under the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1901 (VI of 1901), for the year ending the 30th June 1923, submitted by the Superintendent of Emigration, Calcutta, and the District and Assistant Superintendents of Emigration.]

Administrative measures.

431. The year 1922-23 was an uneventful one in the matter of emigration, and there was a further falling-off in the number of emigrants despatched to the labour districts.

Recruitment.

432. Recruiting operations in Bengal were conducted as usual in the districts of Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore, and the number of garden sardars employed during the year was 261 as against 259 in the preceding year. All worked under the supervision of licensed local agents. The number of local agents' licenses issued was 18 as against 12 issued in the previous year. The total number of emigrants recruited in Bengal was 78 as against 102 in the previous year. The largest number of recruits was from Midnapore, viz., 50. The total number of recruits from Bengal and other provinces embarking at Goalundo was 11,124 as compared with 11,407 in the preceding year.

Arrangements for river transport were satisfactory. One death at Kharagpur and two deaths at Naihati occurred among the emigrants during the year. Of the 11,135 emigrants who arrived at Goalundo from the recruiting districts in and outside the Presidency of Bengal, two deserted, seven were released and two died. There was no death during the steamer journey to Chandpur among the 4,385 emigrants who embarked for the Surma Valley districts. There was also no death during the voyage to Assam among the 6,739 emigrants who embarked for the Brahmaputra Valley.

In connection with the transport of labour to Assam receipts amounted to Rs. 1,937 against Rs. 2,006 in the preceding year, while the expenditure increased from Rs. 19,966-14-4 to Rs. 22,057-3-9.

Foreign Emigration.

Under the Indian Emigration Act, VII of 1922, emigration has since been declared lawful to Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, the Federated and Unfederated Malay States and also for the purpose of unskilled labour to Mauritius. In the year under review, however, the effects of this legislation had not commenced to be felt.

Medical Relief.

CALCUTTA HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

[Triennial Report on the working of Hospitals and Dispensaries in Bengal for the years 1920, 1921 and 1922.]

Number of institutions.

433. During the last 3 years three new hospitals were opened, including the Carmichael Hospital for Tropical Diseases, while two existing

institutions were closed. There was thus a net increase of one institution making a total number of 24 institutions. The total number of beds provided in the in-door hospitals increased from 2,385 in 1919 to 2,857 in 1922. This increase was mainly due to the opening of the Carmichael Hospital for Tropical Diseases with 98 beds, the new police hospitals with 150 additional beds and the expansion of the Campbell and the Carmichael Medical College Hospitals providing additional accommodations for 103 and 174 patients, respectively.

Attendance and admissions.

434. The total number of in-door patients treated in all the Calcutta institutions was 41,824 in 1920, 41,368 in 1921 and 39,867 in 1922. The in-door work of 1922 shows a falling off as compared with that of the previous 2 years—the decrease being due to the improvement in general health during the year. There was a steady decrease in the death-rate in all the Calcutta Hospitals, viz., from 15 per cent. in 1920 to 11·94 in 1922.

The total number of out-patients during the triennium exceeded the total number of patients (1,23,994) treated during the previous triennium by 12,044. The Chandney Hospital, in spite of the decline in the number of patients, remained third amongst the Calcutta hospitals in respect of total attendance of patients, the Medical College and the Campbell Hospitals occupying as usual the first and the second positions in the list.

Nursing.

435. The nursing arrangements at the Presidency Hospitals continued to be satisfactory and were efficiently supervised by the Clewer Sisters. Owing to the financial difficulties of the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institution, which supplies nurses to the Medical College Hospital, the Presidency General Hospital and the Carmichael Hospital for Tropical Diseases, the Government contribution to the Institution was raised as a temporary measure from Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 during the year. Government have also agreed to the levying of increased charges in the Presidency General and the Medical College Hospitals, varying from As. 4 to Re. 1 per head per diem, these charges being credited to the funds of the Nurses' Institution.

Finance.

436. The total receipts of Classes I, III and IV institutions amounted to Rs. 87,72,883 in the last 3 years as compared with the total receipts of Rs. 70,57,079 during the preceding triennium. Of the above income Government contributed Rs. 61,40,717 or nearly 70 per cent. and of this Rs. 56,04,755 was spent on State institutions. The total contribution paid by the municipalities during the last 3 years amounted to Rs. 4,94,227 and subscriptions and donations to Rs. 5,15,272. The total cost of upkeep of the Calcutta Hospitals (excluding investments) was Rs. 86,14,712 against Rs. 66,61,090 during the previous triennium.

DISTRICT HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

Number of institutions.

437. During the 3 years 1920-22, 105 new dispensaries were opened, while 11 institutions were closed. Thus there was a net increase of 94

dispensaries against 65 during the previous triennium. The total number of dispensaries at the end of the period was 859. The total number of beds of the District Hospitals rose to 4,926 during the period under review, the most noticeable increase being in the Mitford Hospital, Dacca.

Nursing.

438. The nursing arrangement in the mufassal hospitals is still unsatisfactory. A very few hospitals have trained nurses. Want of funds is the chief obstacle in the way of introducing any improvement in this direction. The nursing of patients, as usual, is generally carried on either by the relatives of patients or by hospital-dressers, compounders or hospital coolies.

Attendance.

439. Altogether 21,845,791 patients were treated in the area outside Calcutta as compared with 20,179,197 during the preceding triennium. The number of patients who sought medical relief in the in-door wards of all classes of hospitals was 204,408 against 208,860 during the preceding 3 years, the largest number of patients being treated in the Dacca Mitford Hospital. The total number of out-patients treated during the triennium was 21,641,383 as compared with 19,414,211 during the previous triennium.

Diseases treated.

440. Nearly one-third of the total number of patients treated in all the district hospitals and dispensaries were found suffering from malaria. Treatment by injections of quinine bi-hydrochlor was largely resorted to in many places with satisfactory results. During the last 3 years altogether 5,860 lbs. of quinine were purchased by the mufassal hospitals and dispensaries from the Juvenile Jail at a total cost of Rs. 2,15,881 while an additional quantity of quinine worth Rs. 11,10,248 was sold by the Juvenile Jail to the public through post offices. Thus it is evident that the general public took advantage of Government quinine in a large measure. The prevalence of kala-azar is becoming increasingly evident, and cases are found in large numbers in the districts of Mymensingh, Tippera, Nadia and 24-Parganas. The disease is now treated with injection of antimony preparations with encouraging results. A kala-azar class has been started at the Dinajpur Sadar Hospital from December 1922 under the supervision of the Civil Surgeon.

Finance.

441. Excluding the opening balances the total income of classes I, III and IV institutions amounted to Rs. 16,63,620 in 1920, Rs. 19,23,534 in 1921 and Rs. 1,777,990 in 1922. Over 47 per cent. of the total income was derived from local funds, 18 per cent. from subscriptions and donations, 14 per cent. from provincial revenues, 13 per cent. from municipalities and the balance from other sources. The total expenditure (excluding investments) amounted to Rs. 16,28,298 in 1920, Rs. 17,65,466 in 1921 and Rs. 1,744,891 in 1922. The steady increase in the total expenditure was chiefly due to the opening of new dispensaries, employment of additional servants and large increment of salaries of the staff.

LEPROSY.

442. There are three asylums for the treatment of lepers, viz., the Government Leper Asylum at Gobra and the Mission Leper Asylums at Raniganj and Bankura. Besides the cases treated at these institutions leper patients are also treated in the general hospitals. The arrangements at present available are neither adequate nor in accordance with the modern principle of segragation in leper colonies or settlements. It has accordingly been decided to establish a leper colony in Bengal. A suitable site for the purpose has already been acquired at a cost of Rs. 52,000 contributed by the Mission to Lepers, but the construction of buildings has not been undertaken yet for want of necessary funds.

Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling.

[Report of the Eden Sanitarium and Hospital for 1922.]

Admissions.

443. The total number of admissions fell from 369 to 258 in the year under report. This was due mainly to the enforcement of the rule of admission of people on medical certificates only. The breach in the railway line on account of the floods in northern Bengal during the Puja time is also responsible for the falling off to a certain extent. The number of patients treated fell from 105 to 76.

Finance.

444. The total receipts fell short of the expenditure by Rs. 9,235-15-2. An economy was effected by the abolition of the post of the steward of the Sanitarium. Additions and alterations to the building were carried out at a cost of Rs. 219 and the Committee sanctioned the installation of an electric boiler in the hospital at a cost of Rs. 75 for the purpose of making hot water for patients. There was a fall in the price of provisions and the average cost of diet per head fell from Rs. 2-6-11 in the previous year to Rs. 2-1-10.

MENTAL HOSPITALS.

[Report on the Mental Hospitals in Bengal for the year 1922.]

445. In pursuance of the Indian Lunacy (Amendment) Act 1922, the nomenclature of lunatic asylums was changed to "Mental Hospitals." The total capacity of the mental hospitals, including that of the observation ward at Bhowanipur and the insane ward at the Albert Victor Asylum at Gobra, remained the same as in the preceding year, viz., 1,121, *i.e.*, 924 for males and 197 for females. The total population of the mental hospitals, including observation cases, was 1,185, giving a daily average of 954 patients against 957 in the year before. The maximum number confined at any one night was 1,001. The total number of admissions and readmissions during the year was 198 or an excess of 11 over that of the preceding year, while the number of patients discharged was 115 against 138 in 1921. The number of daily average sick among the inmates showed a decrease of 24.

Accommodation.

Population.

Admission and discharge.

Sanitation.

[Bengal Sanitary Board Report and the Report of the Chief Engineer, Bengal, Public Health Department, for the year 1922.]

Sanitary Board.

446. The constitution of the Sanitary Board remained the same as in the previous year. The Board held six meetings in Calcutta and continued to render valuable assistance to Government in the administration of the Public Health Department. They recommeded nine detailed schemes of drainage and water-works, supervised the four current anti-malarial schemes at Meenglas, Singaran, Jangipur and Banka, and advised on four sketch projects for drainage and water-works.

Sanitary Engineering.

447. Eleven water-supply schemes were in course of construction by the Department during the year at Naihati, Patuakhali, Pabna, Rampur-Boalia, Raniganj, Burdwan, Comilla, Midnapore, Bankura, Krishnagar and Dacca. Some of these were improvement schemes, others original schemes. The Department also supervised two water-supply schemes which are under construction by the municipalities of Garden Reach and Uttarpara. Apart from these, progress was made with the Dacca Main Drainage Scheme and the Kurseong Sewerage Scheme. The latter was completed, with the exception of two gulley pit separators, and considerable progress was made with the former, the pumping station buildings and the outfall works being completed.

The total capital expenditure on water-works amounted to Rs. 4,23,601 and on drainage and sewerage projects to Rs. 6,22,015. In spite of the retardation caused by lack of funds the year was one of steady progress. Apart from the works under construction, much useful work had been done in the preparation of schemes to be taken up when funds are available, in addition to the works of inspection under operation, the duties in regard to which are becoming heavier every year.

Vaccination.

[Annual Statistical Returns and short notes on Vaccination in Bengal for the year 1922-23.]

448. During the year 1922-23, the total reported number of vaccinations performed were 2,006,140, of which 1,526,385 were primary vaccinations and 479,755 were re-vaccinations. This result showed an increase of 259,834 in primary vaccinations with a decrease of 15,320 in re-vaccinations. By the end of the year, free and compulsory vaccination was generally introduced in every district board area in the whole Presidency, while by the provision of qualified District and Municipal Health Officers, Sanitary Inspectors, Vaccination Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors and Public Vaccinators, the state of vaccination has definitely begun to improve in Bengal.

The Poisons Act.

[Report on the working of the Poisons Act (XII of 1919) during the year 1922.]

Working of the Poisons Act.

449. The total number of licenses granted during the year under review throughout the Presidency, including Calcutta, was 166 under section 2 and 233 under section 4, as compared with 171 and 248, respectively, in 1921. In Calcutta the total number of licenses issued under both the sections amounted to 155 against 145 of the previous year. The shops of licensed vendors of poisons were inspected by police and other officers as usual. No serious irregularity is reported to have been noticed in the course of inspection. Seven convictions under the Act are reported from the muafssal. There were five convictions for cattle poisoning in various districts and this offence was particularly prevalent in the Brahmanbaria subdivision of the Tippera district.

CHAPTER VII.—INSTRUCTION.

General system of Public Instruction.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 276-289.

Education.

[Progress of Education in Bengal for 1922-23. Annual Report, 1922-23.]

Educational institutions and expenditure.

450. During the year under review the total number of educational institutions increased by 392. In accordance with instructions issued by the Government of India educational institutions are now being classed as recognised and unrecognised according as they adopt the course of study prescribed or recognised by the Education Department or by a University or a Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education as constituted by law and which satisfy one or more of these authorities that they attain to a reasonable standard of efficiency. Unrecognised institutions are for the most part indigenous, institutions for education of a religious character. Recognised institutions rose from 51,930 in 1921-22 to 52,864 in 1922-23; but the number of unrecognised institutions fell from 1,840 to 1,298. Of the unrecognised institutions which disappeared, some became recognised institutions and others closed on account of financial difficulties or lack of public support. The number of pupils reading in recognised and unrecognised institutions rose during the year from 1,892,153 to 1,950,929. The total expenditure on education amounted to about Rs. 331½ lakhs, towards which Provincial Revenues contributed Rs. 131½ lakhs, contributions from District and Municipal funds being Rs. 15 lakhs and 3½ lakhs, respectively; while Rs. 128½ lakhs accrued from fees and Rs. 53 lakhs from other private sources. As a result of the recommendations of the Bengal Retrenchment Committee, the question of reducing educational expenditure was carefully examined and it was decided to effect some reduction in the staff of Government high schools, to abolish certain old type guru-training schools and to hand over a number of circle schools (with reduced status) to local bodies with suitable grants.

Collegiate education.

451. The number of Arts Colleges for males (excluding University classes with 1,889 students) was 34 against 33 in the preceding year, a new college under private management having been opened at Feni in the district of Noakhali. Students reading in Arts Colleges for males numbered 19,219 as compared with 16,741 in the previous year. Of the Arts Colleges 7 were maintained by Government, 1 was under municipal management, and the rest were under private management. The expenditure on Arts Colleges for males amounted to Rs. 27¼ lakhs, of which about Rs. 11 lakhs was met from Provincial Revenues, while Rs. 13¾ lakhs and Rs. 2½ lakhs accrued from fees and other sources, respectively.

Secondary education.

452. The number of secondary schools for Indian boys declined from 2,563 to 2,533. The number of high schools increased by 1, while that of middle schools decreased by 31. The decrease in the former is due chiefly to economic causes. The closing of the middle vernacular schools was due to the unpopularity of purely vernacular education. High and middle English schools gained 7,162 and 4,099 pupils, respectively, but middle vernacular schools lost 167 pupils. The manual training classes attached to secondary schools are waning in popularity in spite of the incessant demand for more practical and less literary education. Secondary schools for boys cost Rs. 87 lakhs, of which Rs. 17¼ lakhs were borne by public funds and Rs. 69¾ lakhs by private sources.

Primary education.

453. Primary schools for Indian boys fell from 35,615 to 35,371, while pupils reading in them increased by 25,009. The apparent decrease in the number of schools is due to the exclusion of night schools from the category of primary schools under special instructions received from and of the Muhammadan population 4·7 per cent. were in primary the Government of India. Of the male Hindu population 5·4 per cent. schools. The total direct expenditure on primary schools for Indian boys amounted to Rs. 44¾ lakhs, of which 50·79 per cent. was provided from public funds and 49·21 per cent. from private sources. A revised curriculum for primary schools was introduced with effect from January 1923 in the province, excepting six districts, in which the old curriculum has been retained, the object being to compare the working of the two curricula in 1924. Central free primary schools, as suggested in Mr. Biss's Reports, were opened in 6 municipalities and 12 unions. The chief obstacle to progress in this direction has been the reluctance of local bodies to make larger contributions or to undertake fresh taxation. A sum of Rs. 68,000 was made over to the District Boards of Rajshahi and Bogra for repairing or reconstructing primary school houses which were damaged by the flood in September 1922.

Training of male teachers for Indian schools.

454. At the end of the year there were 107 institutions for the training of male teachers for Indian schools, viz., 2 colleges, 6 normal schools and 99 guru- and muallim-training schools. The two training colleges maintained by Government at Calcutta and Dacca passed 87 students in the B. T. and 19 in the L. T. Examinations. From the normal schools 213 students obtained teachership certificates, and the guru-training schools passed 1,423 students in the final examination. Owing to financial difficulties the rate of stipends paid to students in normal and guru-training schools was reduced during the year under review.

Professional and Technical education.

455. Arrangements for the study of Law existed, as previously, in three institutions, viz., the Calcutta University Law College and the Law Departments of the Ripon College and the Dacca University. The number of students in these institutions rose from 2,439 to 2,739. Five hundred and six students were successful in the final B. L. Examination.

The Bengal Engineering College at Sibpur had 299 students in the Civil Engineering, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and Mining and Industrial Departments. The apprentice classes were closed in July 1922. The sanction of Government was accorded during the year under review to the inauguration of improved classes in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and Associateship courses which are designed to give Bengali students an opportunity of obtaining instruction to as high a standard as is provided by colleges in Great Britain. Visiting lecturerships were limited during the year to Sanitary and Structural Engineering only. Sixteen candidates passed the B. E. and 17 the I. E. Examination during the year under review.

Consequent on the closing of the subordinate classes at the Bengal Engineering College the whole burden of training Overseers and Public Works Department Subordinates has devolved upon the Ahsanullah School of Engineering, Dacca, which had 417 students on the rolls on 31st March 1923. Owing to pressure of admissions the second year Upper Subordinate class was split up into two sections during the year.

Students in the day and evening classes of the Government Commercial Institute, which has been retransferred to the control of the Education Department, numbered 332. The evening classes are said to be more popular than the day classes. Twenty minor institutions imparting commercial education are affiliated to the Government Commercial Institute and present candidates to the examinations conducted by it.

A Dyeing Course and a Commercial Course have been opened at the Jagannath Intermediate College by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Dacca. Twenty-three students passed the Intermediate Examination with Dyeing and 37 the Intermediate Examination with Commerce in March 1923.

The " B " Final Board has been reconstituted. Out of 36 candidates who appeared in the " B Final Examination " or " School Final Examination, Science Side " 15 were successful.

456. The number of recognised schools of all kinds for Indian girls rose from 12,280 to 12,429 or by 1·2 per cent. and the number of pupils attending them increased by 2,112 or by ·7 per cent. The number of unrecognised schools decreased by 244. Intermediate Arts classes have been opened in the Eden High School for Girls, Dacca, which had 23 students on the rolls. The teaching of elementary physics and chemistry has been introduced in the Bethune College, where the enrolment rose from 114 to 120. The Diocesan College and Loreto House, Calcutta, also increased their strength by 5 and 6, respectively. Most of the high and middle schools for girls are adequately staffed and properly housed and equipped. The work of the Nari Sikha Samiti and the Society for

Education of Indian girls and women.

the Improvement of Backward Classes, Bengal, which are in receipt of substantial grants from the Department, deserves special mention in connection with the expansion of primary education of girls. Twelve women teachers passed the B. T. Examination from the training class attached to the Diocesan College, and Loreto House turned out 4 L.T. teachers. For the training of women teachers of lower grades there were 12 institutions (with 195 pupils), 8 of which were managed by Christian and Brahmo Missions. The zenana system of teaching is popular, but the work is difficult to control; and the results are poor. The work of the peripatetic needle work teachers has been satisfactory. The Lady Carmichael Needlework Diploma and the Diploma of the National Indian Association have given an impetus to the work. The number of girls reading in boys' schools fell during the year by 1,842, a fact indicating that people generally do not favour co-education.

Education of Europeans.

457. There were 66 institutions with 10,707 pupils as compared with 87 with 10,702 pupils in the preceding year. The decrease in the number of schools is apparent rather than real, being due to the fact that the previous practice of counting supplementary or technical classes attached to the main institutions as separate schools has been discontinued. The Elementary School Certificate Examination has been replaced by a Scholarship Examination and the Supplementary Class Final Examination by the Higher Grade School Final Examination.

Education of Muhammadans.

458. The total number of Muhammadan pupils in all types of educational institutions for Indians rose by 21,340. In Arts and Professional Colleges the proportion of Muhammadans to the total number of students increased, but in high and middle stages the proportion declined, while in the primary stage of instruction it remained almost stationary. The chief causes of decline are—(1) the general economic depression; (2) the still-lingering effects of the political agitation; (3) the unremunerative character of education at present imparted; and (4) the popularity of the senior and junior madrasahs.

During the year under review the Serajganj Madrasah was granted recognition as an Islamic Intermediate College. In the Islamic Matriculation and the Islamic Intermediate Examinations, both of which were conducted by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Dacca, 61 and 13 students, respectively, were successful. In February 1923, the creation of the following special scholarships was sanctioned by Government for the benefit of Moslem students:—

(*a*) 12 Junior Scholarships of Rs. 10 a month.

(*b*) 12 Senior Scholarships of Rs. 10 a month.

(*c*) 4 Graduate Scholarships of Rs. 25 a month.

(*d*) 4 Engineering Scholarships of Rs. 25 a month.

(*e*) 4 Sub-Overseer Scholarships of Rs. 15 a month.

Literature and the Press.

459. The total number of publications registered during the year was 4,382, of which 2,977 were books and 1,405 were periodicals. Of the former, 2,771 were original publications and 206 republications. There were 51 new periodicals published, of which 10 were in English, 33 in Bengali and the remainder in Hindi and in Bengali and English. The working of Act XXV of 1867.

460. The total number of newspapers and periodicals, both English and vernacular, printed and published during the year was 496. Of these 327 were published in Calcutta. There were 258 publications in Bengali, 146 in English and the remainder in other languages. The Press.

Ninety-eight new periodicals and newspapers were started, 4 old papers revived and 68 ceased to exist.

461. The year 1922 showed a still further increase in the unusual literary activity which marked the year 1921. The volume of literary productions was in a large measure the result of the continued interest in politics which was fostered by the Reforms and stimulated by the non-co-operation movement. To this extent the increase remains abnormal. Apart from political and semi-political writings, which were very varied in quality, the general standard has improved. Literary publications.

Drama remains in a decadent state. A few minor dramas of the sensational kind were published and had successful runs in the Calcutta theatres, but the only drama of note which appeared was Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore's " Mukta Dhara " (Free Comment)—a symbolical drama with political significance, but not designed to aid any of the political parties of the day. Fiction continued to flourish, although the quality remained of a low standard. It is interesting, however, to note that the lady novelists of Bengal have published the best and most healthy novels of the year. Historical research and historical writings continued to be published, some of them of considerable merit.

There was no valuable contribution to the poetry of Bengal, except for some miscellaneous poems by Rabindra Nath Tagore, which were published in various magazines.

The interest in Indian art continued. In the sphere of industrial literature the only noteworthy publication was a note on country dyes by Sir P. C. Roy, who desires to resuscitate the moribund industry.

462. The Repeal of the Press Act did not elicit much satisfaction and the proposal to print the name of the editor met with general opposition. The tendency was to belittle the value of the concession granted. The Indian Press Act, 1910, and Press Law Repeal Act (XIV of 1923).

During the year 5 pamphlets and 1 picture were forfeited under the Press Act of 1910 and 5 leaflets, 1 pamphlet, 5 booklets, 12 newspapers, 2 books and 1 letter under the Criminal Procedure Code as amended by the Third Schedule of the Press Law Repeal and Amendment Act (XIV of 1922).

Four newspapers were warned, while six were prosecuted under sections 124A and 153A of the Indian Penal Code. One case ended in conviction, one was dropped and in the remainder proceedings were withdrawn on apologies being tendered.

Topics discussed in the Press.

463. The year under review was marked by a growing realisation of the impracticability of the non-co-operation movement as originally conceived by Mahatma Gandhi and resulted in a continuous series of conferences of extreme politicians at which attempts were made to give a more practicable turn to the movement. This development was reflected in the press which ceased to give prominence to detailed programme for the practice of non-co-operation and became absorbed in the controversies arising out of the Bardoli Congress resolutions. No new topic of any particular interest or importance arose till near the close of the year, when the desirability of entering the Councils at the next elections began to be debated. The balance of opinion in the press was opposed to this course, but subsequent developments showed that in this matter the press had not been a true index to public opinion in Bengal.

The Moslem newspapers were on the whole more extreme than those published by Hindus. The Khilafat question, however, dropped quietly into the background and Muhammadan extremists were mainly intent on defending the orthodox form of non-co-operation and maintaining the movement in its original course. This general tendency was modified, however, by a cross-current of communal feeling, which grew in intensity during the year and appeared likely to end in a serious breach of the Hindu-Moslem *entente*.

Perhaps the most novel feature in the press during 1922 was the revelation of class consciousness and increasing emphasis of the different interests of zamindars, capitalists, the middle classes, and the masses. This phenomenon must be attributed mainly to the deliberate efforts of the Indian Communist Party in Europe, whose attacks on the orthodox form of non-co-operation and attempts to divert the movement into more revolutionary channels, through the agency of the proletariat, attracted considerable attention and exercised a noticeable influence on the more hostile section of the press. The part played by members of the old revolutionary parties in Bengal in conducting and contributing to newspapers was another notable development; in particular, certain papers made a special feature of publishing reminiscences of the revolutionary period, which could only have been intended to divert the stream of opinion, and specially of youthful opinion, into the old channel of revolution.

As in previous years, criticism of Government and of Government servants, especially in connection with the Police and Jails Departments, was often of an irresponsible and sometimes of an unscrupulous nature. Some of the less hostile editors are prepared to admit, when confronted

with the possibility of a prosecution, that the circulation of their newspapers is dependent on the maintenance of this attitude, and this type of journalist is prepared to carry his abuse of Government and its works, purely as a commercial proposition, as far as the law allows. Since the repeal of the Press Act, Government have been compelled to rely on prosecution under sections 124A and 153A of the Penal Code and on defamation cases, civil or criminal, for keeping the Press within reasonable bounds.

Literary Societies.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 293—295.

Arts and Sciences.

464. There were 316 students on the roll of the school at the end of the year, of whom 38 were in the Industrial Department and 56 in the Draftsman Department. Of the students admitted to these classes all but 13 Muhammadans and 6 Anglo-Indians were Hindus. It is interesting to note that 35 students came from distant provinces and States such as Kashmere, Punjab, Nepal, United Provinces, Madras and even Ceylon. Government School of Art.

465. An account of the progress of industrial education will be found in the chapter on the work of the Industries Department included in this report. Industrial Education.

CHAPTER VIII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, page 298.

Ecclesiastical.

Establishment.

466. The Ecclesiastical Establishment in Bengal during the year 1922-23, paid entirely or in part by Government, consisted of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, the Archdeacon of Calcutta, the Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop, the Registrar of the Diocese, 12 Chaplains of the Church of England and 13 Clergymen of the Additional Clergy or other Societies, 4 Chaplains of the Church of Scotland, the Most Reverend Archbishop Dr. Meuleman, S.J., and 4 Priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

Chemical Examiner's Department.

[Report of the Chemical Examiner for the year 1922.]

General.

467. Major T. C. Boyd, I.M.S., was in charge of the Department throughout the year except for the period of his leave, when the first Assistant Chemical Examiner, Dr. Hiralal Sinha, temporarily held charge.

Cases.

468. During the year, 1,332 examinations of samples were made as against 929 in the previous year, the increase being chiefly due to the number of samples of cocaine and of medicines received from the Medical Store Depot, as well as from other Government departments. Out of 8 samples of ghee analysed during the year, 4 were of good quality, and the remainder were found to be adulterated.

Medico-legal work.

469. The number of cases investigated during the year increased to 235. The marked increase under blood-stain cases was due primarily to the transfer to the Department of the work of preliminary examination, carried out hitherto by the Imperial Serologist. The percentage of detection in human poisoning cases was 32·08 per cent. as against 38·04 per cent. in 1921. The percentage of detection in animal poisoning cases rose from 49·19 to 57·87.

Veterinary Department.

[Report of the Veterinary College and Civil Veterinary Department for the year 1922-23.]

Bengal Veterinary College.

470. The number of students at the Bengal Veterinary College at the end of the session was 139, of whom more than 50 per cent. belonged to Bengal and the remainder to various other provinces and Native States in India. It was decided that in addition to Bihar, Orissa, and Assam,

which had hitherto paid lump contributions towards the cost of maintenance of the College, other provinces, which regularly send students to Bengal, should contribute on the basis of the number of students sent by them each year.

471. During the year, 2,291 patients were treated and 690 major operations performed against 1,944 and 442, respectively, during the corresponding period of the previous year. There were 18,580 prosecutions under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, but only 31 animals were sent to the College infirmary by the trying Magistrates. **College Hospital.**

472. Regular inspection of all the stables and cattle sheds in Calcutta was made by the glanders staff, and the disease was detected in 19 stables. In the mofussil the deaths from this disease were only 6 as compared with 22 in the previous year. **Glanders and Farcy Act.**

473. There was a marked increase in the mortality of animals from contagious diseases. The increase is almost wholly accounted for by the severe outbreaks of rinderpest in the districts of Nadia, Birbhum, Bankura, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Jalpaiguri. The total number of cattle inoculated was almost double the figures of last year. The number of deaths among inoculated cattle was 1,017 or ·7 per cent. of the total inoculated in the whole province. The departmental propaganda work, consisting of lectures delivered by the staff and the distribution of leaflets, was supplemented by the activities of local bodies. In some districts of East Bengal the local bodies allowed their veterinary assistants to visit the primary schools and to address the boys on the care of animals and cognate subjects. **Civil Veterinary Department.**

474. Only two new dispensaries were established at Rajshahi and Kurseong, thus bringing the total number of such institutions to 41. There was a marked increase, however, in the number of animals treated, which appears to show that these institutions are growing in popularity. **Dispensaries.**

475. The laboratory continued to do good and useful work. Brains of 142 suspected rabid animals and 461 pathological specimens were examined and reported on. Auto-vaccines were prepared and were extensively used in the College hospital with success. **Raymond Research Laboratory.**

Zoological Garden, Calcutta.

[Annual Report of the Honorary Committee for the year 1922-23.]

476. The total receipts of the garden fell from Rs. 1,17,876-6-7 to Rs. 1,14,810-9-9, while the expenditure rose from Rs. 1,05,023-3-7 to Rs. 1,09,111-0-10, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 5,699-8-11. Though 13,948 persons more than in the previous year visited the garden, the entrance receipts fell to Rs. 63,393-15-0, showing a decrease of Rs. 2,460-7-0 on the previous year's receipts. The decrease is reported to be very largely due to the inclement weather which prevailed on **Finance and Statistics.**

Sunday afternoons during which a special rate of fee is charged. The garden was as usual open free to the public one day in each month and 34,503 persons visited the garden on those days.

Administration of the Cinematograph Act.

477. During the year 1922, the financial condition of the Bengal Board of Censors has improved as a result of the abolition of the post of whole-time Inspector and substitution of a part-time officer. The Board held 12 meetings and passed orders for the certification of 605 films. Six hundred and fourteen films were actually examined by the Board's Inspector, and in nine instances certificates were refused.

Administration of the Electricity Act.

478. During the year a license was granted by the Government of Bengal under section 3 (*l*) of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, to the Mymensingh Bank of Commerce and Industry, Limited, for the supply of electrical energy within the town of Mymensingh.

The Bhatpara Power Company have completed their work in the most satisfactory way and have commenced the supply of electrical energy. No marked progress was made by the licensees for the supply of electrical energy to the following areas:—

(1) The Hooghly-Chinsura municipal area;

(2) The Serampore municipal area;

(3) Certain collieries in the coal-fields area.

The Indian Electricity Act, 1910 (IX of 1910), was modified and a new set of rules under the title of the Indian Electricity Rules, 1922, was brought into force during the year. The modified Act and the rules have given more power to local Governments and Electrical Inspectors and have cleared up certain controversial points.

Indian Territorial Force.

479. The 94th Russell's Infantry was established in the course of the year. District Officers and Subdivisional Officers were appointed enrolling officers and requested to render every assistance in obtaining recruits for the unit. By the end of the year the full complement was obtained and recruitment was stopped. In February 1923, a training camp was held at which 490 men attended. Of this number, however, the very large proportion of 290 were released from service as unfit. The remainder, made good progress during the training, which lasted for 28 days. On the whole the battalion has failed to realise expectations.

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MESSRS. J. WHELDON AND WESLEY, LIMITED, 2, 3 and 4, Arthur Street, New Oxford Street, London, W.C. 2.

AGENTS ON THE CONTINENT.

MR. ERNEST LEROUX, Rue Bonaparte, Paris, France.
MR. OTTO HARRASSOWITZ, Leipzig.
MR. MARTINUS NIJHOFF, The Hague, Holland.
MESSRS. R. FRIEDLANDER & SOHN, Berlin.

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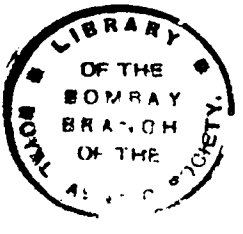

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